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**EA Conditions for the use of  
Accreditation symbols,  
Text reference to accreditation  
And reference to EA MLA  
Signatory status**

***PURPOSE***

This document sets out the minimum conditions which shall be included in the rules governing reference to EA MLA signatory status and the use of accreditation symbols and text reference to accreditation by accredited conformity assessment bodies.

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The publication has been written by the EA Communications and Publications committee.

### *Official language*

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

In this text the term “shall” is used throughout this document to indicate those provisions which are mandatory. The term “should” is used to indicate those provisions which, although not mandatory, are provided by EA as a recognised means of meeting the requirements (i.e. guidance). Accreditation bodies whose systems do not follow this guidance in any respect will only be acceptable if they can demonstrate that their solutions meet the relevant clause in an equivalent way.

This document takes into account the requirements of **ILAC P8 ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement – Supplementary Requirements and Guidelines for the use of Accreditation Symbols and for Claims of Accreditation Status by Accredited Laboratories** and **IAF ML 2 General principles on the use of the IAF MLA mark**.

## 2 OBJECT

This document addresses the various aspects a national accreditation body, hereinafter called “NAB”, shall cover when setting out the rules applicable to accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) for use of its accreditation symbol and references to accreditation and for reference to EA MLA signatory status.

## 3 DEFINITIONS

**Accreditation body logo:** it is the logo used by an accreditation body (NAB) to identify itself.

**Accreditation symbol:** it is the symbol issued by an accreditation body to be used by accredited CABs to indicate their accredited status.

**Reference to accreditation:** it is a text or a disclaimer used by an accredited CAB to refer to its accreditation.

**Reference to EA MLA signatory status:** it is a statement, text or a disclaimer used by a NAB or an accredited CAB to refer to the NAB signatory status of the EA MLA.

## 4 REFERENCES

**ISO/IEC 17011** Conformity assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.

EA-1/06 EA Multilateral Agreement.

EA-2/02 EA Policy and Procedure for the Multilateral Agreement.

**ILAC P8** ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement – Supplementary Requirements and Guidelines for the use of Accreditation Symbols and for Claims of Accreditation Status by Accredited Laboratories.

**IAF ML 2** General principles on the use of the IAF MLA mark.

## 5 ACCREDITATION SYMBOL

### 5.1 General rules

NABs shall have an official accreditation symbol or where relevant one symbol per accreditation scheme to indicate the activity an accreditation is related to.

The NAB may have a logo to identify itself and communicate its name to the public. The use of the accreditation body logo shall be restricted to the NAB.

The logo used by the NAB should be different from the accreditation symbol. The accreditation body logo and accreditation symbol shall be legally protected. Formal registration is recommended.

## **5.2 Conditions for Use**

### **5.2.1 NAB accreditation symbol(s)**

The NAB shall set out conditions for the use of its accreditation symbol(s) by accredited CABs.

The NAB shall set out such conditions to ensure that the accreditation symbol is not used in such circumstances as may be considered to mislead clients or to bring accreditation and/or EA MLA recognition into disrepute.

Use of the accreditation symbol shall not mislead as to what is accredited (scope) or who holds accreditation.

The accredited CAB is responsible for appropriate and correct use of the accreditation symbol under its scope of accreditation by its clients.

The NAB shall set out minimum requirements regarding such use on:

- documents directly related to a service of an accredited CAB such as reports or certificates (including electronic reports and certificates);
- letterheads;
- promotional material.

### **5.2.2 NAB logo**

The NAB shall set out conditions for use of its accreditation body logo by its permanent staff and, where required, the assessors used to carry out accreditation assessments.

## **5.3 Reproduction of the accreditation symbol**

The NAB shall set out the rules for display of the accreditation symbol including information on:

format, proportions, size and colours,

positioning of the accreditation number;

possible mention of the standard used for accreditation and identification of the accreditation activity. NABs are encouraged to make reference to the accreditation activities as defined in the EA multilateral agreement see EA-2/02,

the use of accreditation symbol together with the accredited CAB's logo shall not be misleading. This may include information on relative positioning of the accreditation symbol and the accredited CABs logo;

the possibility to use several accreditation symbols (see also 5.3.2).

### **5.3.1 Embossed, relief or die-stamped versions**

Embossed, relief or die-stamped versions may be used in the relevant colours or in black and white.

### **5.3.2 Multiple accreditations**

The NAB shall have rules allowing accredited CABs being accredited for several activities to use only one accreditation symbol where identical accreditation symbols are used for each accreditation activity. The accreditation symbol shall be used with reference to each accreditation activity and each accreditation number.

## **6 GENERAL RULES FOR TEXT REFERENCE TO ACCREDITATION**

The same conditions and rules shall apply for use of text reference to accreditation as for use of the accreditation symbol (see 5.2.1 and 5.3 above). If there is a difference, the NAB shall specify the conditions. In particular, the use of a text reference to accreditation shall not mislead as to what is accredited (scope) or who holds the accreditation.

The NAB shall set out rules for using a disclaimer to make reference to accreditation instead of using the accreditation symbol.

The NAB shall propose a typical phrase to be used for example, “ CAB accredited by NAB under registration number ...for ACTIVITY/STANDARD”

## **7 GENERAL RULES FOR REFERENCE TO EA MLA SIGNATORY STATUS**

According to EA-1/06 NABs having signed the EA MLA and bilateral signatories to the EA MLA for one or more activities according to the structure of the EA MLA as defined in EA-2/02 are obliged to promote the EA MLA and the acceptance by the marketplace of reports and certificates issued by CABs for services covered by the EA MLA.

NABs shall have a policy for promotion of the EA MLA and the acceptance of services provided by accredited CABs.

The use of reference to EA MLA signatory status shall not mislead as to who is the EA MLA signatory or what is covered by the EA MLA.

### **7.1 Rules for NABs referring to EA MLA signatory status<sup>1</sup>**

Under the policy adopted by NABs for promotion of the EA MLA it shall be mandatory for the NAB to refer to the EA MLA on accreditation certificates. The Policy shall contain rules for:

- Use of a statement or disclaimer e.g. “EA MLA Signatory” on accreditation certificates issued to accredited CABs. The “EA MLA Signatory” statement shall be shown in combination with the NAB logo or NAB accreditation symbol on accreditation certificates issued to CABs for activities covered by the EA MLA. The policy shall also contain provisions for use of the statement or disclaimer if only parts of the activities listed on the accreditation certificate is covered by the EA MLA.
- Use of a text referring to the EA MLA on accreditation certificates e.g. “<NAB name> is a signatory of the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) Multilateral Agreement for accreditation in this field”.

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<sup>1</sup> NAB may also include a reference to the ILAC Arrangement or the IAF MLA for activities covered by the international arrangements if the NAB has signed these arrangements.

The NAB policy shall also contain rules for reference to the EA MLA on letterheads, promotional materials and publications etc.

## **7.2 Rules for CABs referring to EA MLA signatory status of the NAB**

The NAB policy for promotion of the EA MLA shall contain provisions for promotion of the EA MLA by accredited CABs.

NABs are encouraged to develop a policy allowing accredited CABs to make a reference to the EA MLA on reports and certificates issued under their scope of accreditation. The reference to the EA MLA shall be an indication to the marketplace that the service provided by the CAB is covered by the EA MLA.

The policy shall at least contain provisions which specify how accredited CABs may refer to the EA MLA by including a statement, disclaimer or text reference to the EA MLA on reports and certificates issued to clients. A policy allowing accredited CABs to refer to the EA MLA shall contain rules for the use of:

- Reference to the EA MLA by a statement or disclaimer in combination with the NAB accreditation symbol for example "EA MLA Signatory".
- Combination of text reference to accreditation and reference to the EA MLA for example "CAB accredited by NAB under registration number ....for ACTIVITY/STANDARD covered by the EA MLA".
- Reference to the NAB MLA signatory status shall be restricted to accredited CABs under the signed EA MLA activity(ies).

## **8 RULES FOR USE OF ACCREDITATION SYMBOL, TEXT REFERENCE TO ACCREDITATION AND/OR MLA SIGNATORY STATUS BY ACCREDITED BODIES**

### **8.1 Rights to use**

The NAB shall specify accredited CABs the rights they have to use its accreditation symbol and make reference to its accreditation and the NAB EA MLA signatory status.

To be entitled to use the accreditation symbol and to make reference to the EA MLA signatory status of its NAB, an accredited CAB shall:

be accredited, and  
comply with the relevant rules set out by the NAB.

Results issued by an accredited CAB without an NAB accreditation symbol (or reference made to the accredited status of the CAB) cannot claim presumption of conformity with the clauses of the standards ISO/IEC 170XX / EN ISO/IEC 450XX / ISO 15189 nor with the provisions of the EA MLA.

The accredited CAB is responsible for the use of the accreditation symbol or text reference to accreditation by its clients and shall take the necessary steps to ensure proper use. It is reminded that clients of accredited CABs shall not be entitled to use a text reference to the NAB's EA MLA signatory status (see clause 7.2 above).

Whenever an accredited CAB operates from several sites among which at least one is not in the scope of accreditation, the CAB may make reference to accreditation only for work done at the site(s) which is included in the scope of accreditation. When a common document is issued, a disclaimer printed close to the accreditation symbol shall state for instance : « List of accredited sites and scopes available on request" or "List of accredited sites and scopes available on www.... ».

An accredited CAB which holds accreditation for only part of its activities may use the accreditation symbol or make reference to accreditation provided that it is clearly understandable to which part of the activity the accreditation refers.

- **8.1.1 Suspension of accreditation**

The NAB shall have rules specifying that an accredited CAB shall upon suspension, including partial suspension, immediately cease to issue reports, certificates, or labels bearing the accreditation symbol or any type of reference to accreditation and the NAB's EA MLA signatory status, as well as on any document related to activities falling under its suspended accreditation.

- **8.1.2 Termination of accreditation**

Upon termination of accreditation, the CAB shall immediately stop making any claim that it is accredited or distributing any document bearing the accreditation symbol or a text reference to accreditation and/or NAB's EA MLA signatory status.

- **8.1.3 Non accredited activities**

Accreditation shall not be stated, implied or suggested for non accredited activities delivered by the CAB.

## **8.2 Documents and Promotional Media**

- **8.2.1 General rules**

For text reference to accreditation by accredited CABs, the NAB's rules shall provide a typical phrase to be used preferably without variation (see clause 6).

For reference to the NAB's EA MLA signatory status, the text shall at least contain information about the EA MLA activity(ies) for which the NAB has signed the EA MLA and be used in combination with the accreditation symbol (see clause 7.2).

- **8.2.2 Publicity Materials and Websites**

The rules shall set out the conditions under which the accreditation symbol, text reference to accreditation or NAB's EA MLA signatory status may be used on promotional and publicity material. In essence, they shall permit such a use only on material which refer at least in part to an accredited activity.

- **8.2.3 Letterheads**

The rules shall set out the conditions under which the accreditation symbol or text reference to accreditation may be used on letterheads.

Use of reference to NAB EA MLA signatory status by accredited CABs on their letterheads and stationery shall not be permitted.

On commercial documents such as quotations or proposals (including associated stationery) concerning services which do not fall into the CAB's accreditation scope, it should be clearly and unambiguously identified which services are covered by the scope of accreditation and which are not.



If a quotation is to be printed on letterhead bearing the accreditation symbol concerning services exclusively outside the scope of accreditation, it shall contain a disclaimer which is easy to read, stating for instance : « This quotation concerns services which are not covered by accreditation. »

Letters to be printed on letterhead bearing the accreditation symbol and that are provided with reports or certificates containing no accredited results shall include a disclaimer stating for instance : « Attached results are not covered by accreditation. »

- **8.2.4 Other uses**

The use of the accreditation symbol and text reference to accreditation and/or NAB's EA MLA signatory status on items other than those described in the NAB rules shall not be discouraged if it is in line with the requirements in clause 8.3 of ISO/IEC 17011. The CAB shall be invited to seek approval from the NAB prior to any release.

## **8.3 Reports and certificates**

- **8.3.1 General rules**

The rules of the NAB shall set out satisfactory requirements to include the accreditation symbol or text reference to accreditation or NAB's EA MLA signatory status on reports and certificates.

The NAB's rules shall not allow use in such a way as to state, imply or suggest that the NAB accepts responsibility for the accuracy of test, calibration or inspection results or certification decisions covered by accreditation.

The NAB shall not allow such use that states, implies or suggests that the NAB approves a calibrated instrument, test or inspection item or product, or that suggests product approval by the NAB.

The accreditation symbol, text reference to accreditation and/or NAB EA MLA signatory status shall not be included in reports or certificates themselves containing no accredited results. Nor shall such reports or certificates present any reference to the accreditation status.

For the accreditation symbol, text reference to accreditation or NAB's EA MLA signatory status to be used, certificates and reports shall include accredited results. Accredited and non accredited results shall be clearly distinguished.

If an accredited CAB is also certified by a certification body, the certification body logo shall not be used for the reporting of results of any activity covered by the scope of accreditation.

- **8.3.2 Specific rules**

### Opinions, interpretations or other material relating to investigational activities performed by an accredited laboratory

A laboratory is likely to issue reports incorporating the accreditation symbol or text reference to accreditation and/or NAB's EA MLA signatory status that contain opinions, interpretations or other material relating to investigational activities. When such statements are outside the scope of accreditation, the NAB rules shall allow for the report or certificate to include, close to the accreditation symbol or to the expression of opinion, a disclaimer such as: « The opinions/interpretations expressed in this report are outside the scope of accreditation. »

### Site calibration/testing

The NAB rules shall allow for a laboratory which holds accreditation for site calibration/testing to use the accreditation symbol or text reference to accreditation or NAB's EA MLA signatory status in the same way as for calibration/testing performed in a permanent laboratory.

### Use on calibration labels

The NAB shall restrict the use of calibration labels with the accreditation symbol to equipment which has been calibrated under the accredited scope.

## **9 USERS OF ACCREDITED SERVICES**

The NAB may allow for use of its accreditation symbol or text reference to accreditation by the user of the accredited services. The NAB shall then set out specific rules for the use of its accreditation symbol or text reference to accreditation and ensure that accredited CABs have in place policies and procedures for use of its logo in combination with the accreditation symbol or text reference to accreditation by its clients.

### **9.1 Users of accredited management system certification**

The NAB shall set out rules for use of the accreditation symbol or text reference to accreditation by organisations whose management system is certified by an accredited certification body.

Such a use of the accreditation symbol or text reference to accreditation shall be strictly limited to the activity certified by the certification body under its accreditation. The accreditation symbol shall only be used in combination with the certification body's logo (certification mark).

In case of management system certification in the field of the services, the accreditation symbol shall not be used on any related "product".

### **9.2 Users of accredited product certification**

The NAB rules may allow for the accreditation symbol to be affixed on the product itself or its related packaging and must always be displayed in combination with the certification body's logo.

### **9.3 Users of an accredited laboratory's services**

Users of an accredited laboratory's services (manufacturer of measurement instruments for instance) may wish to refer to the accreditation status of the laboratory in their promotional material.

NAB shall set rules for such use of its accreditation symbol or text reference to accreditation and ensure that accredited laboratories have in place policies and procedures for use of its logo in combination with the accreditation symbol or text reference to accreditation by its clients.

The rules shall specify the conditions under which test/calibration reports/certificates may be reproduced or incorporated in the client's promotional documents with prior permission of the laboratory. In general the accreditation symbol or text reference to accreditation cannot be used by clients of accredited laboratories on letterheads, stationery, etc .

#### **9.4 Users of an accredited personnel certification body**

Clients of an accredited certification body for persons shall not be entitled to use the accreditation symbol. However certified persons shall have the opportunity to demonstrate their certified status through the certificate issued by the accredited certification body.

#### **10 MISUSE**

The NAB shall have a clear policy as well as procedures describing the measures to be taken in case of misuse of its logo, accreditation symbol or name, or false or misleading reference to accreditation or NAB EA MLA signatory status by an accredited body or any other party.

The NAB shall provide for sanctions whenever improper use or reference to accreditation is evidenced. The NAB rules shall clearly state that when appropriate and justified legal sanctions under copyright or fair trading laws will be considered.