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# Supplement 1 to EA-2/02 EA Policy and Procedures for the Multilateral Agreement

# Selection, Training and Monitoring of Evaluators

## PURPOSE

This supplement sets out the rules and criteria governing Selection, Training and Monitoring of Evaluators.

*Authorship*

The publication has been written by the EA Secretariat.

*Official language*

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

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Forms are secretariat controlled forms which are updated regularly and are available at a special folder on the EA Intranet.

**Category: EA Governance and Policy documents**


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# *CONTENTS*

## *1. INTRODUCTION*

### 1.1. Scope

This document describes the procedures that EA has adopted for Selection, Training and Monitoring of EA Evaluators.

This procedure is fully based on the common IAF/ILAC document for the evaluation of single ABs (IAF/ILAC A2:2014). The document is to be used by the EA MAC and the EA MAC Management Group (MG), the EA Secretariat, EA evaluators and NABs when nominating candidate evaluators.

### 1.2. Definitions

The following definitions are applicable only for this document.

- **Evaluation Team Leader (TL):** an evaluator responsible for leading an MLA peer evaluation team.

- **Evaluation Deputy Team Leader (Deputy TL):** a TL or (experienced) TM taking over tasks assigned by the TL in preparing and managing the evaluation, can also replace the TL in case of exceptional circumstances such as illness.

- **Evaluation Team Member (TM):** an evaluator serving on an MLA peer evaluation team.

- **Scope:** Set of accreditation activities pertaining to an accreditation field defined as level 2 of the EA MLA, evaluated through the peer-evaluation process, in which the NAB has demonstrated competence to perform accreditation.

## *2. PROCESS FOR INITIAL SELECTION AND TRAINING OF EVALUATORS AND FOR FORMAL AUTHORIZATION*

### 2.1. Initial selection

The EA members through their MAC members shall nominate candidate evaluators in writing, including a description of the experience and competence to EA Secretariat, by way of the EA MAC standard evaluator CV form. This shall be signed by an appropriate Director of the NAB assuring the correctness of the data and suitability of the candidate evaluator. The NAB nominating a candidate evaluator is responsible for ensuring that the nominee complies with the criteria stated in 4.1 and 4.2.

The EA MAC MG shall review the information and confirm whether or not the nomination is accepted. Accepted candidate evaluators will be invited to attend training sessions for new team members; the EA MAC MG may give priority to specific candidate evaluators in order to fulfil the needs for evaluation and to ensure a balanced contribution of all EA members.

### 2.2. Initial training of candidate evaluators

**2.2.1.** Training for new TMs shall be designed under the responsibility of the MAC Management Group (MG) and shall aim to ensure and confirm that the candidate evaluators meet the competence criteria stated in 4.1. and 4.2.

**2.2.2.** EA newcomer's trainings will cover the following topics:

- requirements of EN ISO/IEC 17011 and other applicable documents,

- harmonisation of interpretation of requirements applicable to NABs,

- EA evaluation procedures (EA-2/02),

- EA evaluation documents (checklists, self-assessment tools),

- harmonisation in the evaluation of critical findings,

- evaluating NABs competences with regard to EU harmonization legislation and the appropriate requirements of Regulation (EC) 765/2008.

**2.2.3.** The training team will include at least one representative of the MG and one or more EA MAC members and/or authorized EA evaluators, depending on the specific objectives of the training. A member of the training team shall act as coordinator.

**2.2.4.** The training team shall evaluate each participant taking into account:

- understanding of requirements and procedures: Demonstration by the participants of their understanding and awareness of the evaluation process and the evaluation requirements;

- demonstrated ability to work as an evaluator (dedication, open minded, team work, communication skills, in particular communication in English).

**2.2.5.** The outcome of the training evaluation may be:

- the trainers consider the candidate evaluator ready to participate in evaluations. Based on his/her excellent performance and his/her experience they recommend to skip the trainee team member stage and recommend to invite the candidate evaluator to act as a **Team member** in an evaluation. In such instances, the newly appointed TM shall work under the supervision of, and be monitored by  an authorized evaluator during his/her first participation in a peer evaluation, or

- the trainers consider the candidate evaluator  ready to participate in evaluations and recommend to invite him/her to act as a **Trainee** in an evaluation (see 4.5 for the tasks of a trainee), or

- the trainers are not convinced that the candidate evaluator has reached the necessary level required of a team member and recommend that the candidate evaluator first takes part as an **Observer** in an evaluation, in order to develop his/her experience before being appointed as a trainee     or

- the trainers do not consider the candidate evaluator meets the required competence of a team member and is not ready to participate in evaluations. They shall state the reason(s) why the candidate evaluator has not yet been accepted and where he/she needs to improve in order to get a positive recommendation to become a trainee.

The secretariat shall inform the candidate evaluator and the nominating NAB of the outcome of the training evaluation

**2.2.6.** After authorizing as a TM, trainee or observer, candidate evaluators shall sign a declaration of confidentiality with permanent validity. This shall be submitted to the EA Secretariat for inclusion in their evaluator records.

### 2.3. Initial qualification as an EA evaluator

#### 2.3.1. Team member

Trainee team members shall participate in at least one evaluation under the direct supervision of an authorised TL or TM, who shall also monitor their performance.

After a minimum of one positive monitoring feedback, the EA Secretariat decides that the trainee team member can be formally authorized as a team member Evaluator, and specifies the scope(s) for which the person is considered competent and authorised.

#### 2.3.2. Team Leader and Deputy Team Leader

After a minimum of 3 evaluations as a TM with positive feedback from the participating TLs and NABs, the EA Secretariat may invite a TM to become a TL/Deputy TL if he/she has also demonstrated that he/she fulfils the conditions referred to in section 4.3 or 4.4.

To demonstrate fulfilment of the competence criteria as stated in section 4.3 or 4.4, a TM may first act as a DTL (assisting the TL in planning, preparing, managing the evaluation) or as a TL supervised by an authorized TL.

## 3. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE – IMPROVING AND HARMONISATION

### 3.1. Monitoring and evaluation of performance

The EA Secretariat monitors the performance of Evaluators based on feedback provided by the NAB under evaluation and on the mutual "Review of Performance" of TLs and TMs. The EA Secretariat reports annually to the EA MAC MG and if necessary, proposes and implements corrective measures. The EA MAC is informed of the general conclusions annually.

**3.1.1.** Evaluators are notified of the feedback received at least once every three years or in case of negative results.

**3.1.2.** Evaluators are responsible for submitting their updated CV to the EA Secretariat each time there is a significant change.

**3.1.3.** Based on the monitoring, updated CV and participation in refresher training, TLs and TMs are re-approved for a further term of three years. The EA Secretariat shall refer to the EA MAC MG on critical cases and extension of authorization for additional competence scopes. Evaluators and their NABs are notified of the outcome of the re-approval process.

### 3.2. Improving and harmonisation

#### 3.2.1. Refresher training courses

The MG shall plan and organise refresher training courses for TLs and TMs in order to improve and harmonise the outcome of evaluations.

The training activities shall consider, but not be limited to, issues such as:

- changes in peer evaluation procedures or requirements,

- result of monitoring of the performance of evaluators,

- feedback from EA MAC about evaluation reports,

- complaints about EA peer evaluation process.

TMs are normally expected to attend refresher training 3 years after their initial training or after their first 2 evaluations as a TM, whichever is soonest. Thereafter TLs and TMs are normally expected to attend refresher training every 5 years.

### 3.2.2.    Regular information of evaluators

EA Evaluators are regularly updated by the EA Secretariat on any new requirements and changes in peer evaluation procedures.

EA Evaluators are given access to a dedicated folder on the EA intranet.

Note: In certain circumstances, for instance when planning to extend the scope of the EA MLA to include a new conformity assessment activity, evaluators may need to have their general evaluator training supplemented by technical training in the relevant conformity assessment activity/standard(s): This is to ensure a harmonized approach is taken by the pool of evaluators seeking authorization in this activity.  Although the EA MAC MG will identify evaluators with the necessary experience for this new area, responsibility for this technical training does not rest with the EA MAC but is the responsibility of the EA technical committee that has been given responsibility for this area.  The chair of the relevant technical committee will liaise with the MAC Secretariat to ensure that this is planned and implemented appropriately.  Records of this technical training shall be sent to the MAC Secretariat for inclusion in the evaluators records.

## *4.    REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE EVALUATION TEAM*

### 4.1.    General competence and personal attributes of an EA evaluator

#### 4.1.1.    Competence

An EA evaluator shall be able to determine whether the bodies accredited by the NAB under evaluation comply with the requirements of the appropriate standard(s) listed as level 3 and 4 of the EA MLA and corresponding EA/IAF/ILAC documents, by having knowledge of the relevant standards for accreditation of conformity assessment bodies and other documents and understanding of the applicable sector/scheme.

An EA evaluator shall be able to understand the management practices and processes of accreditation bodies based on his/her knowledge and experience in accreditation.

An EA evaluator shall have knowledge of EN ISO/IEC 17011, Regulation (EC) 765/2008 and the EA MLA requirements.

#### 4.1.2.    Personal attributes

Evaluators shall:

- be open minded and mature,

- have sound judgement and analytical skills,

- be able to perceive situations in a realistic way to understand complex operations from a broad perspective, and to understand the role of individual units within an organization;

- be decisive and diplomatic;

- be versatile and culture sensitive;

- be persistent and able to focus;

- be a team player;

- have interviewing, presentation, note-taking and report writing skills;

- be able to communicate clearly in English (orally and in writing).

  - react effectively in stressful situations;

These attributes are indispensable to:

- obtain and assess objective evidence fairly,

- remain true to the purpose of the evaluation without fear or favour,

- treat concerned personnel in a way that will best achieve the evaluation objective,

- react with sensitivity to the local conventions of the area in which the evaluation is performed

- commit full attention and support to the evaluation process,

- perform the evaluation without deviating due to distractions,

- come to generally acceptable conclusions based on evaluation observations.

## 4.2.    Team members

### 4.2.1.    Specific competence criteria

In addition to the general attributes and competencies described under 4.1, the team member in particular shall be able

- to evaluate whether a NAB complies with the requirements of Regulation (EC) 765/2008, EN ISO/IEC 17011, IAF/ILAC A5 and other relevant requirements and that its CABs comply with the requirements of the appropriate standard(s) and other requirements, based on:

  ✓ understanding of the application of EN ISO/IEC 17011 in a peer evaluation context;

  ✓ knowledge of IAF/ILAC A5 and other relevant requirements;

  ✓ knowledge of evaluation principles, procedures, practices and techniques;

  ✓ skills to effectively plan and organize the assigned evaluator tasks.

- to:

  ✓ decide from the submitted documentation any features requiring special study during the evaluation;

    ✓ decide on sampling of activities and files to be selected and persons to be interviewed based on the analysis of risks and related to the scope of work and the scope of the MLA/MRA;

    ✓ evaluate constantly the effects of evaluation observations and personal interactions during an evaluation;

- to obtain and evaluate objective evidence fairly and to report on his/her findings according to the applicable reporting procedures;

- to understand quickly and easily cultural differences, as far as essential in the evaluation process.

- to determine the criticality of the findings and to evaluate whether the corrective actions decided by the NAB are likely to be effective and to evaluate the corrective actions carried out.

- to act impartially and remain true to the purpose of the evaluation without fear or favour also based on the absence of any conflicting interests.

### 4.2.2. Preconditions

A team member shall

  a. have at least appropriate technical background and at least 3 years' experience as accreditation  assessor

  b. have successfully completed relevant training course(s) and should have experience as a trainee in peer evaluation of NABs (if required),

  c. have experience at a general level in at least one standard that is applicable to the accreditation of a CAB and normally be authorized by their NAB to assess against this standard,

  d. have preferably participated in an EA/ILAC/IAF working group/committee,

  e. be preferably a staff member of a NAB.

### 4.3. Team Leaders

### 4.3.1. Specific competence criteria

In addition to the attributes and competencies described above for evaluator team members the team leader shall be able to

- manage an evaluation, lead an evaluation team in an efficient and effective way, plan and control the contribution of the individual team members and report clearly and succinctly the results of the evaluation;

- discuss the objectives and impact of accreditation services with the management and staff of a NAB, based on his/her knowledge of the accreditation body's services, the (business and regulatory) context thereof and the associated risks;

- understand issues raised by the other members in the team on the accreditation fields which are outside his/her area of expertise;

- optimize the performance of an evaluation team taking into account the strengths and weaknesses of the individual team members;

- take decisions on the classification of findings and on the closing of findings based on the recommendation of the team members;

- chair meetings and to reach consensus on delicate points;

- report to the EA MAC and to present a recommendation, taking into account the findings of all team members, in conformity with the provisions of EA-2/02.

### 4.3.2.    Preconditions

A team leader shall:

- be a permanent staff member of a NAB or a former staff member of a NAB who retired or left the NAB no more than 5 years previously For ex-NAB staff, a working contract must be established with an NAB to allow for the compensation of man days through the operating grant

- have at least 3 years experience in the operation of a NAB and have appropriate technical background and experience in assessment;

- have enough working experience in a NAB to be able to understand requirements of any of the relevant standards that are applicable to the accreditation of CABs,

- have participated successfully in at least three evaluations of NABs as a TM or as a deputy TL.

## 4.4.    Deputy Team Leaders

### 4.4.1.    Duties

A deputy team leader shall

- take over tasks assigned by the TL in preparation and managing the evaluation,

- replace the TL when the TL is not available (e.g. in case of illness or other circumstances preventing the TL from undertaking their duties).

### 4.4.2.    Preconditions

A DTL shall be a Team Leader or an experienced Team Member capable of acting as a Team Leader and shall be a permanent staff member of a NAB.

The role of DTL may be used as training for development of future TL.

The DTL shall have different competences in terms of conformity assessment body type and standard(s) experience, from those of the TL in order to cover as much of the accreditation activities of the scope of the NAB under evaluation as possible.

## 4.5.    Trainees

### 4.5.1.    Duties

A Trainee Team Member acts as a Team Member in his/her field of expertise. However, during the first evaluation activity, a member of the team (Team Leader, Deputy Team Leader or experienced Team Member) with competence in the same scope is assigned to mentor the Trainee and assist where needed.

The tasks assigned to the trainee are decided by the mentor, considering the experience of the Trainee on the basis of the feedback sent by the secretariat based on the trainee's CV,

and the appraisal of his/her performance by the trainers following his/her participation to the training of new comers.

### 4.5.2. Preconditions

A trainee team member shall have participated in a "newcomers" training session and have been recommended as a Trainee.

The Trainee's NAB shall pay all expenses (travel + accommodation), including for witnessing purposes.

## 4.6. Observers

### 4.6.1. Duties

An Observer takes part in an evaluation as an additional person added to the regular team. The Observer is 'linked' to a Team Member with competence in the same field, who has been involved before in at least 2 evaluation. The observer is expected to observe the team and not actively take part in the evaluation. In particular after the evaluation the observer shall:

1.      summarise the activities of the team member in the field of expertise of the observer;
2.      summarise the rational in terms of the requirements (EN ISO/IEC 17011, EC-765/2008, etc.) and EA procedures (EA-2/02) for the selection of files and witnessing that was made by the team member observed ;
3.      summarise in his/her own words the rational for the findings raised which are related to the field in question and to the general management system of the AB;
5.      explain what the observer learned from this observation;
6.      formulate at least two opportunities for improvement for the observed EA evaluation team;
7.      The summary will consist of 750-1000 words and will be provided to the EA-MAC secretariat and to the team leader of the evaluation team.

### 4.6.2. Preconditions

- after having participated in a training for 'newcomers' be recommended as an Observer,
- the Observer's AB pays all expenses (travel + accommodation), including for witnessing purposes;
- the Observer shall be provided with the same documents from the AB as the rest of the team.

### 4.6.3. Procedure

The summary will be provided to the trainers who were responsible for the appraisal of the person after the training. They will review the summary, discuss with the team leader and team member observed and decide whether the Observer will be recommended as a trainee or will have a negative recommendation. The Observer and the EA MAC secretariat are informed about this recommendation.

## *5.* *RECORDS*

### 5.1. Records on evaluators

The EA Secretariat shall maintain the following records for each evaluator:

- CVs.

- Signed declaration of confidentiality.

- Evaluation for participation in a Peer Evaluator Training Course / Authorization letter (including competence).

- Reviews of performance.

- Any action taken by the MAC in relation to the performance of the evaluator.

### 5.2. Records on training activities

The EA Secretariat shall maintain the following records of Newcomer Training and other training activities:

- Course program, including date, venue and trainers

- Course material, including presentations, tests and exercises.

- Attendance list.

- Evaluation of participants on "newcomers" training courses.