EA Inspection Committee (EAIC)
Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure

1 Terms of Reference

1.1 Scope – The EA Inspection Committee (EAIC) is the forum for the discussion of all matters related to the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies performing inspection activities.

1.2 Task and Responsibilities – Within its agreed scope and in accordance with the Articles of Association (AoA) and Rules of Procedure (RoP), the EAIC has the following functions:

1.2.1 to discuss matters related to inspections and accreditation of inspection bodies;

1.2.2 to discuss and harmonize the implementation of accreditation activities by EA members, namely by preparing and updating documents as well as preparing resolutions for EA General Assembly (GA);

1.2.3 to enhance the equivalence and consistency of accreditation systems and practices, namely by organizing training events, surveys, workshops and establishing dedicated networks, as well as maintaining records of the exchange and sharing of experience and knowledge;

1.2.4 to set-up and disband task forces (TF) as needed to deal with specific matters or tasks for a limited duration;

1.2.5 to coordinate and liaise with other EA committees and councils to foster harmonization and the improvement of multilateral recognition agreements;

1.2.6 to interact and liaise with relevant stakeholders, including scheme owners and regulators;

1.2.7 to follow the European and international standardisation work and contribute as required for the development of relevant standards and guidance documents;

1.2.8 to follow and contribute as required to the preparation and implementation of European legislation;

1.2.9 to contribute to the worldwide harmonization of accreditation activities, by following, reviewing and contributing to the ILAC and (if relevant IAF) technical work and liaising with relevant bodies in other recognized regions;

1.2.10 to pursue any other activity required by the EAGA or EA Executive Committee (EX)
2. Rules of Procedure

2.1 These Rules of Procedure (RoP) of the EAIC derive from the EA Articles of Association (AoA) and EA Rules of Procedure (RoP, see document EA-1/17). They are specified in this document to complement or clarify the above mentioned dispositions, as well as to facilitate the understanding of the functioning of the committee.

2.2 Membership and participation – EA members (full and associate) and recognized stakeholders (according to document EA-1/15) are entitled to nominate at least one representative for the EAIC.

2.2.1 The EAIC Chair can also invite other persons, experts or stakeholders to participate in the work and meetings.

2.2.2 The EA secretariat will maintain a list of EAIC members and update it regularly.

2.3 Chairmanship – The EAIC Chair is elected as foreseen in the EA AoA and EA RoP.

2.3.1 The EAIC Chair is responsible to propose a yearly work plan in accordance with the ToR, to be agreed at the EAIC and approved at the EAGA together with the associated budget. Furthermore, the EAIC Chair has the duty to ensure that the work plan is fulfilled and providing corresponding activities reports to the EAGA and EAEX (as needed).

2.3.2 The EAIC Chair is also responsible to ensure that the EAIC ToR and RoP are respected.

2.3.3 The EAIC elects a Vice-Chair who will support the chair in preparing and performing activities related to the committee, working groups and task forces. He/she will also represent the Chair in case of his/her absence.

2.4 Management – The EAIC Chair shall propose the mechanisms for ensuring proper management of the work inside and outside of meetings.

2.4.1 The EAIC Chair can propose members to assist and advise in the management of the work.

2.4.2 The EA secretariat will provide for the secretariat of the EAIC.

2.5 Meetings – The EAIC meets at least once a year, normally twice a year. Although, extraordinary meetings may be called upon the initiative of the EAIC Chair or at least 1/3 of its members.

2.5.1 A spring and an autumn meeting are thus normally scheduled in the first and third quarters of the year. The EAIC Chair decides the date and location of the EAIC meeting. This normally takes place in consultation with the membership and other committees’ chairs, as necessary.

2.5.2 The EAIC Chair may propose a preparatory session or meeting, restricted to EA members as necessary, with a view to prepare discussions in the plenary session or full meeting and to enhance the sharing of experience and harmonization. Nevertheless, conclusions from the preparatory session, even when be representative of the EAIC, must be endorsed at the regular meeting with all participants.

2.5.3 The organization of the meetings will follow document EA-0/10.

2.5.4 When justified, more than one representative of each EA member or stakeholder may attend the meeting, subject to availability and previous agreement with the EAIC Chair.
2.5.5 Meetings will follow an agenda, normally drafted and circulated at least two to three weeks in advance of the meeting date to the membership, except where otherwise agreed. Agendas will be confirmed at the beginning of each meeting, thus subject to changes.

2.5.6 Questions from the membership or the stakeholders are submitted at least a month in advance to the scheduled committee meeting. They are treated by a review group prior to the presentation and discussion in the committee meeting. The review group presents the questions and the possible answers. The review group is composed by members of EAIC and led by one of the members. The members and the leader of the review group can change upon requirement.

2.5.7 Minutes of the meetings will be drafted within one month after the meeting, and circulated for a one month commenting period, before being approved by the membership.

2.6 Conclusions and Decisions – Conclusions and decisions will normally and preferably be taken by consensus. Stakeholders’ opinion(s) will be taken into account in the decision-making process. Whenever consensus cannot be achieved, and a decision is necessary, a voting will take place as follows: the quorum for a valid voting will be met when half of the membership is voting or represented, and decisions will be taken by simple majority of the casted votes. Abstentions and blanks are counted as being votes not casted.

2.6.1 Decisions taken by the EAIC shall be respected by the membership, unless they are subsequently revoked. Decisions that need a legal or binding nature shall be proposed to the EAGA for approval and formal endorsement.

2.6.2 Decisions that have a medium/long-term impact shall be recorded in a List of Decisions or Decision Log for easy retrieval. The record is kept updated by the EA secretariat.

2.7 Working Groups – For dealing with long-term matters of relevance, working groups (WGs) can be established by the EAIC, subject to support and approval by the EAEX and endorsement by the EAGA.

2.7.1 WGs will have Terms of Reference confirmed by the EAIC and subject to endorsement by the EAEX.

2.7.2 Membership and operation of WGs will follow the RoP established for the EAIC, except if otherwise proposed and agreed with the EAIC Chair. In particular, they can operate in a simpler organisational structure only as (technical) networks (TN), where contact points shall be designated by each EA member, and without the need for regular physical meetings.

2.7.3 Convenors (or equivalent mechanism for leadership) of the WGs will be appointed from its EA members and confirmed by the EAIC. Convenors have the duty to coordinate the work assigned to the WG or to the TN and ensure its timely execution and report back (at least) for the EAIC meetings.

2.7.4 An established WG can manage Task Forces (TF) in a form similar to the EAIC.

2.8 Task Forces – For dealing with short-terms matters or specific tasks, task forces (TFs) can be established by the EAIC Chair, who will determine the leadership and composition, taking into account the membership views.

For EAIC:
Rolf Straub / 11.05.2018