



Terms of Reference of the EA Inspection Committee

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1. SCOPE AND FIELD OF APPLICATION

The EA Inspection Committee is the forum for the discussion of all matters related to the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies performing inspection activities and the responsibilities of all parties concerned.

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. COMPOSITION

2.1 Members

The Inspection Committee is composed of EA Members, Recognized Stakeholders (RS), and representatives (experts, stakeholders, observers) invited by the Chair.

In accordance with EA-1/17 *Rules of Procedure* (RoP) clause 10.11, each EA Member is entitled to nominate one member to the Inspection Committee. Recognised Stakeholders are entitled to nominate one person to the Inspection Committee.

The EA Secretariat provides a Secretary to the Inspection Committee.

2.2 Chair and Vice-Chair

The Chair is elected by the General Assembly for a period of two years in accordance with the *Articles of Association* and RoP.

The Chair shall be an A or B Members (except for HHC and MAC, the Chair shall be A Member) When the Chair of the Inspection Committee is a B Member, the Vice-Chair shall be an A Member.

The Vice-Chair is elected by Inspection Committee A, B, C Members for a period of two years / Chair mandate. Candidates can be nominated by A, B and C and D Members (RoP clause 10.10). The deadline for sending nominations to the Secretariat will be specified in the call for nominations.

The quorum must be reached (two-third of the participants) for the result to be valid. For a candidate to be elected, he/she must obtain the simple majority. If no candidate obtains the simple majority at the end of the 1st round, a second round will be set up. The 2 candidates having collected the greatest number of votes will go for the second round.

The EA Inspection Committee Chair is responsible to propose a yearly work plan in accordance with the ToR, to be agreed at the Inspection Committee.

The Chair is also responsible to ensure that the Inspection Committee ToR, the *Articles of Association* and the RoP are respected.

The Vice-Chair assists the Chair in carrying out his/her duties, especially in preparing the agenda and performing activities related to the committee, working groups and task forces. The Vice-Chair will also represent the Chair in case of his/her absence.

2.3 Management Group

In accordance with the RoP, clause 10.5 and 10.13, the Inspection Committee may set up a Management Group to ensure proper management of the work inside and outside of meetings.

The Inspection Committee Management Group (MG) prepares the work of the Inspection Committee. It aims to ensure the overall management and coordination of the operations of the committee. The task of the MG is to contribute and confirm the meeting agenda and ensure efficient communication and feedback between the Inspection Committee and the WGs and the Review Panel.

The MG is led by the Inspection Committee Chair. The MG is composed of the Chair, the Vice-Chair as well as the conveners of the IC WGs and of the Review Panel. A member of the MG can be designated by the Chair to represent or replace the Chair in meetings. Additional members may be added as needed to help achieving its aims. The interaction between the members of the MG is intended to be made by electronic means (e-mails / web meetings).

3. MEETING

The Inspection Committee meets at least once a year, normally twice a year, although extraordinary meetings may be called upon the initiative of the Inspection Committee Chair. A spring and an autumn meeting are normally scheduled in the first and third quarters of the year.

The date and location of the Inspection Committee meeting will be decided by the Inspection Committee Chair, in consultation with the membership and other committees' Chairs, as necessary.

The Inspection Committee 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 representative of the Inspection Committee, must be endorsed at the regular meeting with all participants.

When justified, more than one representative of each EA Member or stakeholder may attend the meeting, subject to availability and previous agreement with the Inspection Committee Chair.

A draft agenda will be distributed at least 4 weeks before each meeting, except where otherwise agreed. Agendas will be confirmed at the beginning of each meeting, thus subject to changes.

Questions from the Inspection Committee membership will be submitted at least one month before a committee meeting to be considered by a Review Group prior to their presentation and discussion at the committee meeting.

Any suggestion to be added on the draft agenda, as well as documents to be published for the meeting, will be sent at least one week before each meeting, except for hot last-minute issues.

Draft minutes will be distributed within 2 months after the meeting for a one-month commenting period, before being approved by the membership.

Decisions lists may be considered and approved at the meeting and published immediately after the meeting.

The organization of the meetings will follow EA-0/10: *Procedure for EA Meetings*.

4. TASK AND RESPONSABILITIES

4.1 The Inspection Committee has the following functions:

- to discuss matters related to inspections and accreditation of inspection bodies;
- to discuss and harmonize the implementation of accreditation activities by EA Members, namely by preparing and updating a set of documents as well as resolutions;
- to enhance the equivalence and consistency of accreditation systems and practices, namely by organizing training events, surveys, workshops and dedicated networks, as well as maintaining records of the exchange and sharing of experience and knowledge;
- to set-up and disband working groups and task forces as needed to deal with specific matters or tasks matters of a long-term nature or for a limited duration (see section 5 below);
- to coordinate and liaise with other EA committees and councils to foster harmonization and the improvement of multilateral recognition agreements;
- to interact and liaise with relevant stakeholders, including scheme owners and regulators;
- to follow the European and international standardisation work and contribute as required for the development of relevant standards and guidance documents;
- to follow and contribute as required to the preparation and implementation of European legislation;
- 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.

4.2 The Inspection Committee is responsible for liaisons with ILAC/IAF, implementing the EA “One Voice” approach, following up new developments in accreditation schemes and regulations, resolving technical issues arising in PE’s, managing standards transition, highlighting issues to be covered by promoting in EA’s communications.

The Inspection Committee shall pursue any other activity required by the General Assembly, Executive Board or Technical Management Board and cooperate with the other EA committees on a regular basis.

5. WORKING GROUP / TASK FORCE GROUP / TECHNICAL NETWORK

The Inspection Committee may decide to set up working groups and task forces or other sub-structures to deal with specific issues. In this case, the provisions set out in the RoP clauses 10.13 - 10.16 and 10.18 shall be respected.

The Inspection Committee set up a Review Group aimed to consider questions raised by the committee membership prior to their presentation and discussion at the committee meeting. The Review Group is composed of members of the Inspection Committee and convened by one of them. The members and convener of the Review Group may change upon requirement.

The Inspection Committee will keep a list of the active working groups and task forces or other sub-structures, their tasks and composition. These sub-structures may operate in a simpler organisational structure as technical networks, where contact points shall be designated by each EA Member, and without the need for regular physical meetings.

The Inspection Committee working groups’ and task forces’ conveners have the duty to coordinate the work assigned to their structures and ensure its timely execution and report back (at least) for the committee meetings.

Working groups can manage task forces in a form similar to the Inspection Committee

6. DECISION MAKING / VOTE OTHER THAN FOR ELECTIONS

Decisions will be taken in accordance with the RoP clause 10.17 (clause 11 for the MAC).