

EUROPEAN co-operation for ACCREDITATION – ADVISORY BOARD

RULES OF PROCEDURE

As agreed at the 2nd meeting on 28 April 1999,
amended and approved at the 10th meeting on 24 April 2003,
at the 22nd meeting on 3 April 2009, at the 31st meeting on 30 October 2013,
at the 39th meeting on 3 May 2018, and further at the 40th EAAB meeting on 17 October 2018.

1. Background

These Rules of Procedure lay down internal rules for the EAAB activities in order to execute its tasks and responsibilities in an efficient and effective manner. They supplement the Terms of Reference. The points covered are the following:

- Membership
- Agendas and circulation of documents
- Working language(s)
- Procedures for arriving at consensus, decisions (voting etc)
- Outputs (decisions, advisory documents)
- Changes to the Rules of Procedure.

2. Rules of Procedure (supplementing the Terms of Reference)

2.1. Membership

See Terms of Reference Section 2.

Additional requirements:

The Chair shall call for nominations four months before the Board meeting envisaged for renewal of Membership with a deadline of one month before the date of this Board meeting.

It is the responsibility of each college to coordinate its representation in the Board and to nominate the adequate number of Members. This includes the responsibility of each college to ensure a well-balanced representation of all interested parties within its respective constituency, including sectoral stakeholders. If more nominations than the number of Members determined for each college are received, the EAAB Chair in consultation with the relevant college shall decide on the final membership.

Nominations for the members of the NA college shall be processed in cooperation with the European Commission through the Internal Market of Products (IMP) expert group.

The Members representing the conformity assessment operators college, the industry college, and the national authorities college, shall declare to the Board the constituencies that they represent and undertake to ensure that they have adequate arrangements for consulting, briefing and debriefing.

Conflicts related to representation of interested parties shall be addressed by the relevant college in the first instance. It is only when the conflict cannot be solved within that college that the matter shall be raised with the Board for further consideration.

See Terms of Reference Section 6 (Sub-item 6.6)

Additional requirement:

As an exception, Members shall be entitled to nominate deputies to attend meetings. Any such nominations must be made in writing to the secretariat as soon as possible in advance of the meeting concerned.

2.2. Agendas and circulation of documents

See the “Supplement to the EAAB Rules of Procedure” describing the administrative support from the EA Secretariat to the EAAB, which the circulation of agendas and papers is part of.

2.3. Working language(s)

The working language of the Board is English.

2.4. Procedures for arriving at decisions and advice

Issues on which the Board votes and the voting procedures are set out in Sections 6.4/6.5 of the Terms of Reference. In all other cases the Board will endeavour to work by consensus, as defined by ISO/IEC.

2.5. Output of EAAB work

The work of EAAB can be divided into three main sections:

- Annual Report, internal documents and formal resolutions, on which a vote may be taken (See Terms of Reference Section 6).
- Advice provided to EA

In the last two cases, advice provided by the Board will be recorded in the meeting minutes and, if decided by the Board, may also be in the form of policy documents.

2.6. Requests of information about the EAAB

The Secretariat will forward to the relevant college or college secretariat any request concerning the EAAB requiring direct involvement or interaction, with copies to the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the EAAB.

The Secretariat will be kept informed of the exchange and communications.

2.7. Changes to the Rules of Procedure

The Board may at any time modify its Rules of Procedure on the basis of a proposal from one or more members adopted by two-thirds majority.

2.8. Annual review

The Board will carry out an annual review of its operations according to the rules set out in the Secretariat management system and on the basis of the actions lists and the current work programme.

3. Administrative support from the EA Secretariat to ensure the proper operation of the EAAB (Supplementing the present Rules of Procedure)

EAAB Secretariat:

- In general, ensures all the administrative functions of the Board.
- To be provided and maintained by the EA secretariat, as foreseen under chapter 9 of the Terms of Reference of EAAB

Tasks and responsibilities of the EAAB secretariat:

3.1. Preparation of and assistance in EAAB meetings

- Participation in at least two preparatory meetings and two full EAAB meetings per year, as the regular schedule. Participation in additional meetings that may be called if deemed necessary and under the conditions set out in the Terms of Reference.
- All preparatory work required for these meetings, including their convocation and organisation, preparation of draft agenda proposals, timely provision and circulation of meeting documents to participants, all related communication with participants, etc.

3.2. Drafting of EAAB documents and provision of information of relevance to the Board

- Membership list
- Draft meeting **agendas** (a first draft shall be provided 4 weeks prior to the meeting, as a rule)
- Agendas and **papers** will normally be circulated three weeks in advance of meetings, by e-mail and will be posted on the EA intranet. Documents supporting agenda items foreseen for discussion shall be distributed not later than 3 weeks in advance of a meeting.
- The **file** containing the final draft agenda and all documents for the meeting should be circulated by the EAAB Secretariat until one week in advance of the meeting at the latest. It is understood that flexibility must exist to allow for issues and papers of specific interest for the Board that come up at the last minute to be dealt with after the closing time.
- List of meeting **conclusions & resolutions** (the list shall be provided within 3 working days following a meeting, as a rule)
- **Meeting minutes**, a 6-8 page report on the Board's discussions, shall be provided within 2 months after the meeting. In the absence of significant comments received by email within 3 weeks, the report will be considered as approved.
- **Work programme** and **actions list** (both documents shall be updated/drafted and provided following the circulation of the draft meeting minutes)
- Other reports, written opinions or advice, or other documents, as may be requested by the Board
- In between EAAB meetings, regular provision of information in the form of short summaries, progress reports, briefing notes etc. on the state of play and new developments concerning key topics and other EA documents that are in the discussion and adoption process within EA

3.3. Communication with EAAB members and other stakeholders/stakeholder communities

- Distribution of meeting documents to EAAB members via electronic mail (the documents on issues foreseen "for discussion" by the Board shall be provided and circulated 3 weeks in advance of an EAAB meeting, as a rule)
- Provision of meeting documents and other EAAB documents on EA intranet (EAAB section) for EAAB members (the documents "for discussion" by the Board shall be posted 3 weeks in advance of a meeting, as a rule)
- Dealing with all communication between EA and its committees/other operational structures and the EAAB. Ensure that EAAB is informed about all issues being dealt with by EA that are of relevance to stakeholders. Ensure that EAAB is effectively/formally involved wherever this is specifically foreseen in the relevant EA procedural documents (e.g. during the development process of EA guidance documents).

- Inform EAAB about all consultations carried out by EA with “relevant stakeholders” (cf. Regulation on accreditation, Annex A point 3).
- Circulation of the conclusions & resolutions list, the annual report, and other documents as specifically determined by the Board, to both the members of EAAB and all other “EA stakeholders” (i.e. stakeholders with which EA has entered into an agreement as referred to in the “EA policy for relations with stakeholders”).
- As EA contact point, dealing with requests for general information about the Board and its activities, received from stakeholders or interested parties outside the EAAB, pointing them to the relevant colleges or Board members for more specific information, where requested.
- Circulation of documents to the Member States’ national authorities responsible for accreditation, according to requests and instructions from the EAAB national authorities college (IMP expert group, direct emails, etc.).
- Administration of EA intranet website access rights for EAAB members.

3.4. Procedures to ensure visibility and transparency of the Board and its activities

- Publication of all relevant EAAB documents on the EAAB internet webpage (<http://www.european-accreditation.org/structure#4>) and regular update of the EAAB webpage, in particular following each Board meeting.
- Regularly include information on EAAB activities in the EA Report and all suitable EA communication materials.
- Dissemination within EA and the relevant committees/operational structures of the Board’s conclusions & resolutions and of specific advice requested.
- Communication with stakeholders and other interested parties outside the EAAB who wish to learn more about the Board and its activities. Workload related to this task is likely to increase considerably following the entry into force of the new Regulation on accreditation and the role of the stakeholder representation within EA as foreseen therein.

3.5. Other

- Carry out all activities relating to the proper control of EAAB documents, including in particular the update, as necessary, of the Board’s Terms of Reference, Rules of Procedure, membership list, work programme and actions list, and other documents as may be requested by the Board
- In general, assist and support the EAAB Chair and Vice-Chairs in carrying out their respective duties.
- Preparation of data and follow-up of actions if the Board is involved in an arbitration or advice process on disputes related to accreditation and to the development of guidance.
- Carry out all necessary follow-up activities as identified during the yearly management review.

Particular attention is drawn to the importance of the timely preparation and circulation of documents in order to enable the necessary preparatory work within the EAAB stakeholders structures, and the ensuing need for the EAAB secretariat to provide the appropriate resources.

This list of tasks and responsibilities shall be reviewed by the Board on a yearly basis (management review).