

APPROVED Minutes of the 48th Meeting of the EA Advisory Board

held on Wednesday 16 November 2022 in Brussels, Belgium in a hybrid form.

Participants:

EAAB Chair: Miruna Dobre (EURAMET).

EAAB Vice-Chairs: Martin Stadler (BUSINESSEUROPE), Bruce McGill (TIC Council).

CAB College: Ivan Savov (EFAC), Benny De Blaere (EURO CER Building), Alexander Safarik-Pstrosz (EUROLAB), Marcus Long (IIOC).

Industry College: Andrew Evans (CAPIEL), Lars Bo Hammer (Danish Industries), Franziska Wirths (ORGALIM).

NA College: Natalia Kolibová (NA, Czech Republic), Michael Ottmann (NA, Germany), Sezen Leventoglu (NA, Turkey).

Consumers: Libor Dupal (ANEC).

European Private Scheme Owners: Thomas Votsmeier (EOQ).

European Standardisation Organisations: Enda McDonnell (CEN-CENELEC).

Metrology Stakeholders: Marc Wouters (WELMEC).

EC: Zacharias Bilalis, Lina Karbauskaitė.

EFTA: Gudrun Rognvaldardottir (EFTA).

EA: Maureen Logghe (EA President), Andreas Steinhorst (EA Executive Secretary), Frédérique Laudinet (EAAB Secretariat).

1. Opening of the meeting – Roll call

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the delegates to this first physical meeting since November 2019 owing to the Covid-19 pandemic; participants taking part remotely were also welcomed. EAAB Members were then invited to a roll call and introduced themselves briefly.

The Chair informed that she had been nominated as the Vice-Chair of EURAMET, which she would represent now on the Board while continuing to chair the EAAB. As a result of her stepping down from the National Authorities College (NAC), a call for nominations is being circulated among IMP members until 28 November 2022 to fill her vacant seat; every interested candidate has been invited to this meeting to get an insight of EAAB discussions. Actually two nominations are needed because of the additional vacancy that was not filled after the NAC elections in 2021 due to lack of candidates. A potential candidate, i.e. Ariane van Cutsem from Belgium, participated in the meeting remotely.

The Chair also reminded that a fifth representative was still to be nominated in the Industry College.

Decision

The Board took note that:

- Miruna Dobre had become the Vice-Chair of EURAMET which she represented now on the Board;
- due to her stepping down from the National Authorities College (NAC) chairmanship, and the previous vacancy not filled during the NAC elections in 2021, a call for nominations of a couple of new NAC members had been launched until 28 November 2022;

Action EAAB Secretariat to update EA-INF/02: Contact Persons of EA Full and Associate Members, Recognized Stakeholders and Observers and the EAAB membership list in due time.

- Miruna Dobre remained the EAAB Chair until the next term of the Board starting in autumn 2024.

2. Approval of agenda

List of conclusions and resolutions of 47th Meeting of the EAAB
Approval of Draft Minutes of 47th Meeting of the EAAB
Action list (actions not covered elsewhere)

▪ Approval of agenda

The agenda was adopted as distributed for the meeting.

▪ Approval of previous Minutes

There had been and was still no comment on the draft minutes, which were approved as distributed for the meeting.

Action Secretariat to publish the minutes on the relevant EAAB intranet and internet pages

3. Topics for discussion

3.1 Stakeholders' representation in EA; interaction between EAAB and EA

Notes of the meeting of TFG for improvement

(TFG composed of M. Dobre, M. Logghe, M. Stadler and B. McGill).

The Chair recalled that, in November 2021, the Board had set up a small TFG to consider possible ways of how to improve the communication and interaction between the EAAB and EA, and how to organise increased feedback from EA on EAAB recommendations. The TFG had a brainstorming meeting on 16 May 2022, where it was agreed that the EAAB Chair and Vice-Chairs and the EA President would meet once in-between the two annual meetings of the Board in order to improve the communication and interaction between the EAAB and EA.

M. Logghe suggested setting up a new meeting date. The Chair agreed.

M. Stadler confirmed that this was a good idea to set up such regular meetings between the chairs of the three colleges and the EA President, supported by the EAAB Secretariat. He asked EAAB members to send the group those issues that could not wait until the next Board meeting.

M. Stadler also reported that it appears that the members of the Industry College did not have the same access to EA intranet folders, and asked the Secretariat to check and ensure that every EAAB member has an equal access to the EA intranet.

M. Stadler requested more information about the first EA C-Level meeting to take place on 24 November 2022 further to the EA General Assembly on 23 November 2022.

M. Logghe replied that this C-Level meeting was targeted at EA NAB CEOs and convened by Roeland Nieuweboer from RvA. She proposed inviting him to the next EAAB meeting in order to get detailed information on the motivations and aims of these C-Level meetings.

B. McGill welcomed the TFG as an intermediary between the semestrial meetings. The real questions for him is whether the EAAB adds value or not, and if yes, which constructive output it should have. The aim is to mutualise our expertise for a constructive added value. He referred to the *ISO Guidance Document for Building Stakeholder Relations related to ISO 26000:2010 Guidance on Social Responsibility*, suggesting carrying out a gap analysis for the next meeting and, if needed, revising the EAAB Rules of Procedure.

M. Stadler proposed looking at the guidance document at first, and then considering any need for action. The Chair agreed to have the guidance tabled for the next TFG meeting.

Decision

The Board welcomed that, during the TFG meeting held online on 16 May 2022, it had been agreed that the EAAB Chair and Vice-Chairs and the EA President would now meet once in-between the two annual meetings of the Board in order to improve the communication and interaction between the EAAB and EA.

Action EAAB Chair to set up a new date for the next meeting in January-February 2023.

The Board also took note that:

- the Industry College's members appeared to have different access to the various folders on the EA intranet;

Action EAAB Secretariat to check and ensure EAAB Members have equal access to the EA intranet.

- the next EA General Assembly in November 2022 would be followed on the second day by the first C-Level meeting targeted at EA NAB CEOs, convened by Roeland Nieuweboer from RvA, the Dutch NAB. The Board agreed to invite him to the next EAAB meeting in order for him to explain the rationale of these C-Level meetings.

Action EAAB Secretariat to invite R. Nieuweboer (RvA) at the Board's next meeting.

Finally, in regards to enhancing stakeholder relationships within EA, the Board agreed that an overlay review of the *ISO Guidance Document for Building Stakeholder Relations related to ISO 26000:2010 Guidance on Social Responsibility* should be carried out at the next EAAB Colleges TFG meeting in order to have a first look at the document before considering any need for action.

Action EAAB Secretariat to upload the links to documents on the Intranet (done).

Action EAAB Chair for agenda of TFG meeting.

3.2 Challenges for the conformity assessment infrastructure: new regulations for new technologies' implementation (Artificial Intelligence Act, Cybersecurity, Sustainability)

The Chair thanked A. Steinhorst for the very useful list of new regulations dealt with within EA.

B. McGill stressed how difficult it was to find adequate experts with required competences to meet the technological challenges and regulatory demands. The issue impacts all sectors, both the conformity assessment and industry sectors.

F. Wirths expressed concern about the lack of information and coordination between the European structures and national authorities.

For B. McGill, the question is how to facilitate getting the right capabilities and performing these new conformity assessment activities, and how to implement these new regulations with a harmonised approach, especially when no harmonised standards exist.

M. Logghe ensured that EA Members were informed as soon as a new regulation came up in order for them to liaise with their national authorities. EA is fully aware of the issue. There has already been some discussion about establishing a future database, but this proved not easy to find competent persons for new activities. She agreed to exchange position papers with TIC Council, while regretting there was not really a near solution.

F. Wirths and M. Stadler agreed to share relevant position papers published by European industry associations.

For the Industry College, raising politicians' awareness is not sufficient. Rather, proactive solutions should be developed to help avoid lack or unavailability of competences.

B. McGill highlighted an education and training issue, which is of the utmost importance because the whole dimension of conformity assessment is changing radically and this will have a huge impact on all EAAB Colleges.

A. Safarik-Pstrosz agreed with all the discussion so far. For him, EA should submit the following issue to the EC: how to meet the conformity assessment requirements set out in new regulations without harmonised standards? How can accreditation, which is the best way to assess CABs, be performed based on new technical specifications?

A. Steinhorst confirmed that so far EA had been focusing on contributing to the development of the new regulations, which of course should be implemented - and the right network should be established for a harmonised implementation. The key issue is how to work with the new regulations and the challenge is how to get experts. Stakeholders' support and a common approach are strongly needed. A. Steinhorst added that there was some overlapping between the regulations, and ENISA had massive expert groups.

B. McGill said he would share TIC's 40-page position paper, and supported having an EA combined paper. M. Stadler pointed out that any joint contribution would have to focus on common issues and specific aspects for the individual constituencies. B. McGill insisted on having a more valuable consolidated paper, arguing that a joint contribution with industry was needed, especially in software and cybersecurity matters.

M. Long agreed on the observation concerning the lack of resources and the need for sharing ideas and solutions. For him, this may be an opportunity for EA to establish a different high-level structure aimed to create liaison with the EC. Conformity assessment issues would have to be covered by this structure in order for it to influence the EU legislation and implementation of regulations. He asked whether EA could consider such a structure.

A. Steinhorst replied that every idea was very much welcomed and examined by the TMB. But there are so many new regulations that this proves impossible to follow up the whole of them; priorities have to be set up. Then M. Long proposed to have dedicated groups for specific issues.

M. Logghe concluded that the Executive Board would look at the issue.

M. Wouters summed up the issue: what has to be developed and implemented in order to improve conformity assessment capabilities?

B. McGill added the issue of the convenience of standards.

M. Stadler highlighted that, in the end, the market needs to have recourse to a sufficient number of competent third party conformity assessment bodies.

Decision

The Board:

- again acknowledged the concerns expressed by the CAB and Industry Colleges which raised the issue of the availability of sufficient experts and required competences to continue performing conformity assessment activities, and again stressed the need for a harmonised approach to the implementation of these regulations, especially when no harmonised standards exist;
- again acknowledged the needs expressed by the CAB and Industry Colleges to monitor the market situation and to ensure the readiness of harmonised implementation to the market;
- again thanked EA for the efforts made to meet the challenges arising from the new regulations for new technologies' implementation for the entire conformity assessment infrastructure, while asking EA and EA Members to support further and speed up these efforts to ensure timely implementation of the legislations;

- acknowledged that it was not sufficient to raise politicians' awareness and called for proactive solutions given that the changing dimension of conformity assessment would have a huge impact in each college of the Board;
- agreed that the CAB College shares TIC Council's position paper on the issue;
Action CAB College Chair to send the paper to the EAAB Secretariat for publication on the intranet.
- acknowledged the opportunity to create a high-level (not technical) structure in order to liaise with the EC and to influence the EU legislation and implementation of regulations, and asked EA to consider the relevance of such a new structure.
Action EAAB Secretariat to put forward the issue to the EA Executive Board.

3.3 New single international accreditation organisation

M. Logghe recapitulated that, in order to be more efficient, to enhance the visibility and to strengthen both organisations, ILAC and IAF decided in 2019 to establish a single international organisation for accreditation. One of the key issues still pending is the voting rights for stakeholders in the new body. The majority of ILAC/IAF accreditation bodies, who expressed their clear position, are against voting rights of stakeholders. She updated that the ILAC, IAF and joint General Assemblies had just taken place or would be held during the week. A new ballot should be sent out asking clearly whether ILAC and IAF members want to give stakeholders voting rights in the General Assembly of the new body or not. She recalled the current situation: in ILAC, stakeholders have voting rights in the Executive Committee only, whereas in IAF they have also voting rights in the General Assembly.

M. Long confirmed that there were two different views and a way out should be found. Even if the ballot is clear, we have to remain pragmatic.

B. McGill said that stakeholders' participation being key within any form of constitution, hence voting being an integral aspect needs to be defined and at what level.

M. Logghe pointed out that EA just wanted to have answers because the situation was not clear so far. In her opinion, virtual meetings do not facilitate getting efficient interaction and clear replies, and that is why the decision has been taken a very long time.

M. Long agreed, while adding that many people were also uncomfortable with the issue of voting rights.

For A. Steinhorst, the question is what the single new body should be: shall it be a body of accreditation bodies or not? Shall it be a body of accreditation bodies or a body of conformity assessment entities? This should be clearly solved and mentioned in the Articles of Association. For him, the next ballot is still a survey, and he is waiting for a final decision.

M. Stadler thanked EA for its discussion paper published as EAAB(22)14, and agreed on EA's position on the issue of stakeholders' involvement in the new body: stakeholders' views have to be taken into account and this should be demonstrated. However, stakeholders should be clearly differentiated from accreditation bodies when it comes to membership criteria and voting rights. L. B. Hammer agreed with M. Stadler.

Decision

The Board:

- took note that the final decision on the merger between ILAC and IAF still depended on the outcome of a new survey asking whether stakeholders should have voting rights at the General Assembly or not;

- acknowledged that the Industry College: thanked EA for the clarity of its paper dated 24 June 2022 on the issue, agreed on EA's position that stakeholders' views shall be taken into account and this consideration shall be demonstrated, and like EA, emphasised the need for a clear distinction between conformity assessment bodies and accreditation bodies in the membership criteria;
- asked EA to keep the EAAB informed of any developments concerning the future single international organisation. **Action EA**

4. Topics for information

EAAB Matters

4.1 Report from the EAAB MAC observer: 4-5 October 2022 meeting Report from the EAAB HHC observer: 13-14 September 2022 meeting

- A report on the last MAC meeting held on 4-5 October 2022 in Turin, Italy, had been drafted by Sezen Leventoglu, the EAAB MAC observer, and distributed among the papers.

S. Leventoglu highlighted the following couple of points:

- the MAC decision to start the peer evaluations in the field of Validation and Verification against EN ISO/IEC 17029 on 5 October 2022, and the launching of the EA MLA for the accreditation of Validation and Verification bodies (EN ISO/IEC 17029 (level 3) and ISO 14065: 2020 (level 4)) with the following EA MLA signatories: ENAC and TURKAK;
- the Roadmap for the EA MLA on Biobanking: the publication of the standard ISO 20387 in the Official Journal of EU is the prerequisite to launch the EA MLA for Biobanking.
- A report on the last HHC meeting held on 13-14 September 2022 in Brussels had been drafted by Benny De Blaere, the EAAB HHC observer, and distributed among the papers.

B. De Blaere indicated that his report was based on the minutes of the HHC meeting, and asked for the possibility of adding relevant papers, if not published under other agenda items, to the EAAB meeting papers for clarity purposes.

A. Steinhorst replied that the HHC Chair should be asked for that. Provided that there is no confidentiality issue, relevant HHC papers can be added to the EAAB meeting papers.

B. De Blaere went through his report and highlighted some points of specific relevance for the EAAB, which gave rise to the following comments:

- HHC TFG Remote Assessments

A. Evans asked for any conditions and limits to remote assessments.

A. Steinhorst replied that EA-2/21: *Guidance on Remote Assessments* had been approved and published on the EA website where it was publicly available.

M. Stadler pointed out that the report gave the impression that the HHC accepted remote assessments irrespective of technical means. For him, the use and acceptance of remote assessments should not be limited to exceptional circumstances.

- HHC TFG Legal – Foreign accreditation activities in EA territory

M. Stadler asked for clarifications about bullet points a) and b) under § 8.2 of the HHC observer's report. A. Steinhorst replied that EA promotes cooperation, and not competition.

A. Steinhorst informed that this legal report was not publicly available for now and should be used internally as a support to NABs. M. Logghe added that the Executive Board would consider making this report publicly available.

– Support of WG AfN to the Commission on new modules

A. Steinhorst explained that EA supported having additional conformity assessment modules for the verification of carbon footprint claims and other assessments that fit within the eco-design framework. So far existing modules under the NLF were the most adequate ones, but new modules could be more appropriate now. TFG's proposal is considering which modules could be more applicable.

B. De Blaere pointed out that the final outcome of TFG's proposal was awaited with urgency. F. Wirths added that the outcome may also be relevant for the current evaluation of the NLF (see agenda item 4.2).

Decision

The Board:

- took note of the information contained in both reports published as EAAB(22)15 and EAAB(22)22, and thanked the observers for their comprehensive reports;
- agreed, upon his request, that the HHC observer should add relevant information documents to his report, provided that the EA HHC Chair did not see any objection;
Action EA to ask the HHC Chair for any problem of confidentiality.
- asked EA to keep the EAAB informed of the decisions and proposals made by WG AfN (Accreditation for Notification) about any additional conformity assessment modules needed for the verification of carbon footprint claims and other assessments that fit within the eco-design framework.
Action EA

4.2 Evaluation of the New Legislative Framework (NLF): first exchange of views on conformity assessment and accreditation issues: update from the EC

The Chair informed that the evaluation report had just been released a few days ago.

Z. Bilalis confirmed and said that the outcome of the evaluation proved how reliable the current accreditation and conformity assessment systems were. He reiterated that the purpose of this consultation was not to make a revolution, but just to look at what had been done in the NLF during the last six years. The intention was not to reshuffle the whole system. He added that the EC had taken account of stakeholders' comments as much as possible. The EAAB will be informed of the next steps.

A. Steinhorst thanked the EC and all people engaged in the evaluation process for this really interesting paper. A lot of issues are worth being considered and deserve discussions actually. EA will perform a thorough reading of the report, which could be only gone through so far.

A. Steinhorst agreed with the Chair on the fact that this was a very positive conclusion about accreditation, but he also pointed out that some critical issues, which have already been tackled in EA, should be considered carefully.

M. Stadler suggested reading the report and list any issues as a basis of the next meeting's agenda and discussions, and including the response papers among the next meeting papers.

A. Steinhorst said that the EA Executive Board would discuss the report on the following week. It could not be tabled for the upcoming General Assembly due to its very recent publication, but of

course, EA will respond to it in one way or another. The HHC should also consider it. EA will look at the best platform for a careful consideration of the evaluation report.
The Chair asked EA and all colleges to share any response paper with the EAAB.

Decision

The Board:

- took note that: the final report on the EC's public consultation aimed to provide assessment of the NLF had just been released a few days ago, and confirmed the reliability of the accreditation and conformity assessment systems in place;
Action EAAB Secretariat to upload the evaluation report on the Intranet (done).
- thanked the EC and all those engaged in the evaluation process for this very interesting paper, acknowledged that this evaluation did not aim to reshuffle the NLF but was intended to consider the current state-of-play of it, and took note that the EC would inform the EAAB of the next steps;
- agreed that EAAB members should read the evaluation report and list any possible critical issues for the next EAAB meeting so that they can be tabled for discussion at future meetings.
Action EAAB Colleges/members to send a response paper to the EAAB Secretariat for inclusion into the papers of the next meeting.
- asked EA which will soon discuss the evaluation report to share any response paper with the EAAB. **Action EA**

4.3 IAF CertSearch database: Update

A. Steinhorst updated that the new principles of the database had been approved. It is now mandatory for CBs to upload their certificates in the database and update relevant information.

A. Steinhorst recommended to go through the dedicated website, especially the FAQs section which is a very good source of information.

He added that Maarten Aerts from NA was the new EA representative in the IAF Database Management Committee (DMC).

Decision

The Board took note that the new principles of the IAF CertSearch database had been approved, including its mandatory use for CBs which have to upload and maintain relevant information concerning their certificates in the database.

4.4 Brexit: update

A. Steinhorst referred to the EA communication released on 17 June 2022 (published as EAAB(22)21) concerning the acceptance of test results provided by a laboratory accredited in the UK, being also an Approved Body from UK, in the CPR field. So far there has been no other activity than the two issues clarified in the EA communication.

Referring to the link published on the agenda ([Guidance on Using the UKCA Marking \(amended 10 Aug 2022\)](#)), B. McGill reported that education was going on.

He also informed that the deadline for when businesses need to use the UKCA marking had just been extended on 14 November 2022: the CE marking and reversed epsilon marking on the GB market can still be used until 31 December 2024.

Decision

The Board took note that the deadline for when businesses need to use the UKCA marking had just been extended to 31 December 2024, until when the CE marking and reversed epsilon marking on the GB market was still accepted for the purpose of UKCA marking.

4.5 Confidentiality of proprietary information in the case of acquisition of notified bodies by non-EEA based organisations

M. Stadler said that the issue was also addressed in the NLF evaluation report. He confirmed that this was definitively an issue which might become a growing concern.

B. McGill agreed, and suggested putting the issue forward to the EC for EU legal experts to consider it. For him, this is rather a legal matter than a commercial and competitive issue. Raising the issue with the EC would also allow to prevent any repetition of it in the future. For him, it is to the EC to decide on the issue.

M. Stadler preferred that relevant actors should come up with proposals for solutions.

The Chair pointed out that the EAAB's role was to advise EA, not the EC.

A. Steinhorst confirmed that this was a legal issue which had not to be discussed in EA.

Decision

The Board:

- again emphasised the need to ensure the confidentiality of proprietary information in the case of acquisition of notified bodies by non-EEA based organisations, and definitively confirmed this confidentiality as a major and possibly growing concern for both the industry and the conformity assessment constituencies;
 - acknowledged that the CAB College supported putting forward the issue to the EC and EU legal experts, also to warn about any recurrent need for strengthening and ensuring further the confidentiality of company proprietary information in such cases;
 - agreed to keep the issue on the agenda and, if needed, to put it forward to EA.
- Action EAAB Chair for next agenda.**

EA Matters

4.6 Endorsement of EA new work items

- **Elaboration of an EA Code of Conduct**
- **Elaboration of a *Guidance Document on Transfers of Certificates under ISO/IEC 17024***
- **Revision of EA-2/15: *EA Requirements for the Accreditation of Flexible Scopes***
A. Steinhorst commented that this revision, resulting from a HHC workshop, would give some clarification to the concept of flexibility of sites.
- **Revision of EA-2/02 S4: *Procedure for the Management of the Peer Evaluations in case of Extraordinary Circumstances***
A. Steinhorst commented that this procedure was not for COVID-like circumstances only.

Decision

The Board endorsed the four new work items proposed for:

- the elaboration of an EA Code of Conduct according to the rationale set out in Document EAAB(22)11;
- the elaboration of a *Guidance Document on Transfers of Certificates under ISO/IEC 17024* according to the rationale set out in Document EAAB(22)20;
- the revision of EA-2/15: *EA Requirements for the Accreditation of Flexible Scopes* according to the rationale set out in Document EAAB(22)12;

- the revision of EA-2/02 S4: *Procedure for the Management of the Peer Evaluations in case of Extraordinary Circumstances* according to the rationale set out in Document EAAB(22)13.

4.7 Publication of the EC ["Blue Guide" on the implementation of EU product rules 2022](#)

A. Steinhorst reported that the revised *Blue Guide* had been published in the EU Official Journal OJ C 247 on 29 June 2022. Some new elements have been identified and are now discussed in the HHC. Although this is not a legislation or legal paper, the *Blue Guide* is an important document for EA.

M. Stadler said that some points not related to accreditation had been directly raised by stakeholders to the EC.

Decision

The Board took note that the revised EC *Blue Guide* has been published in June 2022, and the new elements contained herein are considered by the EA HHC.

4.8 CETA – Implementation of the Bilateral Cooperation Agreement with Canada/SCC: new momentum with EU recognition of SCC; news about the guidelines for implementation of the new protocol

A. Steinhorst reported that the partnership agreement with SCC to support CETA had been renewed on 29 September 2022. However he still regretted that there was so far neither application from CABs, nor request from the industry sector. One option could be to extend the scope of the protocol to other sectors agreed by both parties; this may create a new momentum and boost applications. The point is that EA has no idea of the actual request.

M. Long asked whether a demand study or any survey had been carried out before the protocol was implemented. A. Steinhorst replied that the process had been established in 2016 for foreign certified bodies to be assessed by local CABs, and vice versa, for the ATEX equipment.

Decision

The Board took note of EA regret's that, despite the renewal of the partnership agreement with SCC to support CETA on 29 September 2022, there had been still no application from EA Members for being recognised under the CETA protocol.

4.9 Report from EA on various issues (FPA, BSCA, EA-1/13; etc.)

In addition to the current issues already tackled during this meeting, A. Steinhorst reported that:

- EA was pleased to have signed a new FPA for 2023-2026 with the EC on 30 August 2022. This 4th FPA would also be signed very soon with EFTA;
- because Belarus suspended partnership under the EU Neighborhood Policy (ENP) which allows BSCA to be eligible for EA membership, EA was considering suspending or terminating BSCA membership in EA. This would be discussed at the forthcoming General Assembly;
- EA-1/13 had been revised, balloted and just approved. The revision aimed to deal with non-EU and non-EFTA countries, for which evaluations by EA will concern only the framework of relevant bilateral agreements.

Decision

The Board was pleased with the signature of the 4th Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) for 2023-2026 by EA and the EC on 30 August 2022, and took note that EFTA will sign a similar agreement with EA in the coming days.

The Board also took note that EA was considering a suspension or termination of BSCA membership in EA, because Belarus suspended partnership under the EU Neighborhood Policy (ENP) which allowed BSCA to be eligible for EA membership.

4.10 Agenda of EA General Assembly meeting on 23 November 2022 in Brussels

The Chair confirmed that she would attend the GA meeting.

Further to a question by the Board, A. Steinhorst reported that *EA Strategy 2025* should be concluded next year. Then EA should decide on a timeframe for developing a new strategy.

The Board thanked EA for the oral and written reports provided under these items.

4.11 Relations with stakeholders

A. Steinhorst reported that two EA Recognised Stakeholders, FSSC 22000 and UILI, should have their RS agreements renewed in November 2022.

Three new applications for getting the RS status had also been received from CECIP as well as the RSG and EU FPR Notified Body coordination groups.

The Chair asked whether this would mean that all NBs could be EA Recognised Stakeholders, which would considerably increase the number of EA Recognised Stakeholders. A. Steinhorst replied that the only criteria to be complied with to become a RS are set out in EA-1/15. NB-Rail is already an EA Recognised Stakeholder, and all NBs are welcome. EA's relations with NB coordination groups prove important for EA.

Decision

The Board endorsed the applications for EA Recognised Stakeholder status submitted by:

- the Comité Européen des Constructeurs d'Instruments de Pesage (CECIP), the European weighing industry association ;
- the Recreational Craft Sectoral Group (RSG), a Notified Body Coordination Group pursuant to Article 42 of Recreational Craft Directive (RCD) 2013/53/EU;
- the EU FPR Notified Body Coordination Group pursuant to Article 36 of the Fertilising Products Regulation (FPR) 2019/1009/EU.

5. Any other business

None.

6. Selection of date and place of next meeting

The Board agreed to have a hybrid full-day meeting on **Thursday 11 May 2023** from 10 am to 3 pm (to be confirmed), and thanked EFTA for offering to host the meeting at EFTA House in Brussels.

Action EFTA to confirm room availability.

The Chair thanked the Board's Members for their valuable participation and closed the meeting.

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List of the abbreviations taken for granted in the minutes

AB: accreditation body
APAC: Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation
ARAC: Arab Accreditation Cooperation
CAB: conformity assessment body
CAS: conformity assessment scheme
CB: certification body
CD: committee draft
CCMC : CEN-CENELEC Management Centre
EA BLA: EA Bilateral Agreement
(EA) **CC:** EA Certification Committee
(EA) **CPC:** EA Communications and Publications Committee
(EA) **HHC:** EA Horizontal Harmonisation Committee
(EA) **LC:** EA Laboratory Committee
(EA) **MAC:** EA Multilateral Agreement Council
EA MLA: EA Multilateral Agreement
EC: European Commission
ECOS: Environmental Council of the States
EFTA: European Free Trade Association
ENP: EU Neighbourhood Policy
EU ETS: European Union Emissions Trading System
FPA: Framework Partnership Agreement
IAF: International Accreditation Forum
ILAC: International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
IMP expert group: Internal Market of Products expert group
NAs: national authorities
NAB: national accreditation body
NBs: notified bodies
NoBos: Group of Notified Bodies
NLF: New Legislative Framework
NWI: new work item
RoP: Rules of Procedure
RS: Recognised Stakeholder
TIC industry: testing, inspection and certification industry
SS: sector scheme
SO: scheme owner
TFG: task force group
ToR: Terms of Reference
WG: working group
WP: work programme