



Inter American Accreditation Cooperation

IAAC BYLAWS

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Inter American Accreditation Cooperation

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P R E A M B L E

The Inter American Accreditation Cooperation, IAAC, is a cooperation of accreditation bodies, of certification, registration and inspection bodies, testing and calibration laboratories and other interested parties whose objective is to facilitate commercial exchange among its nations or blocs of nations in the Region of the Americas through a system of conformity assessment bodies. IAAC was created on November 20th - 22nd, 1996, in Montevideo, Uruguay, with the participation of forty-five delegates representing seventeen countries. In this meeting ten full members and six associate members signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), and the organizations expressed their commitment to work toward a Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA). The Bylaws define the formal structures and rules of procedure to be followed so that the objectives of the MoU are fulfilled. They are to be interpreted at anytime in such a manner as to give precedence to the text of the MoU.

CHAPTER 1 MISSION

Article 1.1 IAAC's mission is:

- a) To facilitate commercial exchange among the nations or bloc of nations of the Region of the Americas (RA) through a system of conformity assessment bodies;
- b) To develop and maintain Multilateral Recognition Arrangements (MLAs) among IAAC Member Bodies, and to achieve recognition as a Regional Cooperation by IAF and ILAC;
- c) To promote international acceptance of the accreditation granted by the accreditation member bodies, based on equivalence of operation of their accreditation system and their respective programs, within the international accreditation framework, and in cooperation with other regional groups of accreditation member bodies, as well as to promote international acceptance of certificates and results issued by duly accredited conformity assessment organizations;



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- d) To develop and manage a program for transferring expertise and technical information, sharing of information, visits by regional experts, and similar activities identified to assist new or developing accreditation programs, among present and potential IAAC members, and the countries of the American Region that request such assistance.

CHAPTER 2 GOALS, DURATION, AND HEADQUARTERS

Article 2.1 IAAC's goals are:

- a) To develop the IAAC Multilateral Recognition Arrangements;
- b) To facilitate collaboration, cooperation and mutual assistance among members by means of seminars, meetings of experts and sharing of information and experiences;
- c) To assist the current and potential IAAC members, and provide advice on matters related to accreditation of certification/registration bodies, inspection bodies, testing and calibration laboratories;
- d) To harmonize the criteria for the operation of member accreditation bodies, based on relevant ISO/IEC international standards and guides and IAF and ILAC guidance documents;
- e) To facilitate the exchange of information between accreditation body members of IAAC and with members of IAF and ILAC;
- f) To promote cooperation in training of assessors and other personnel of accreditation bodies;
- g) To participate in regional and international meetings and conferences related to accreditation;
- h) To promote acceptance of certificates and reports issued by accredited conformity assessment bodies through established Multilateral Recognition Arrangements;
- i) To encourage and facilitate the adoption and implementation of standards, guidelines and application of documents that have been developed by relevant international bodies;



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- j) To encourage and support the development of accreditation bodies in the region of the Americas;
- k) To work with other regional bodies such as PanAmerican Standards Commission (COPANT), the InterAmerican Metrology System (SIM), the Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC), the Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (PAC), the European cooperation for Accreditation (EA), the Southern African Development Community in Accreditation (SADCA), as well as technical bodies from different sub regional integration blocs; and
- l) To seek financial support and other type of support from regional and international organizations for the development of training and assessment programs, in the areas of accreditation and conformity assessment, for IAAC members.

Article 2.2 IAAC has a duration of 99 years, effective on the date that it was incorporated in 2001.

Article 2.3 IAAC is legally established in the United Mexican States, as a Civil Association. It is located in Mexico City, without prejudice that agencies, branches, delegations, offices or representations be established elsewhere in Mexico or abroad, and without prejudice of stating conventional domiciles on the contracts and agreements it may engage in.

CHAPTER 3 STRUCTURE

Article 3.1 IAAC's organizational structure is made up of a General Assembly, an Executive Committee, a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Treasurer, an Executive Secretary; and committees and subcommittees. IAAC's organizational structure is described in Figure 1.

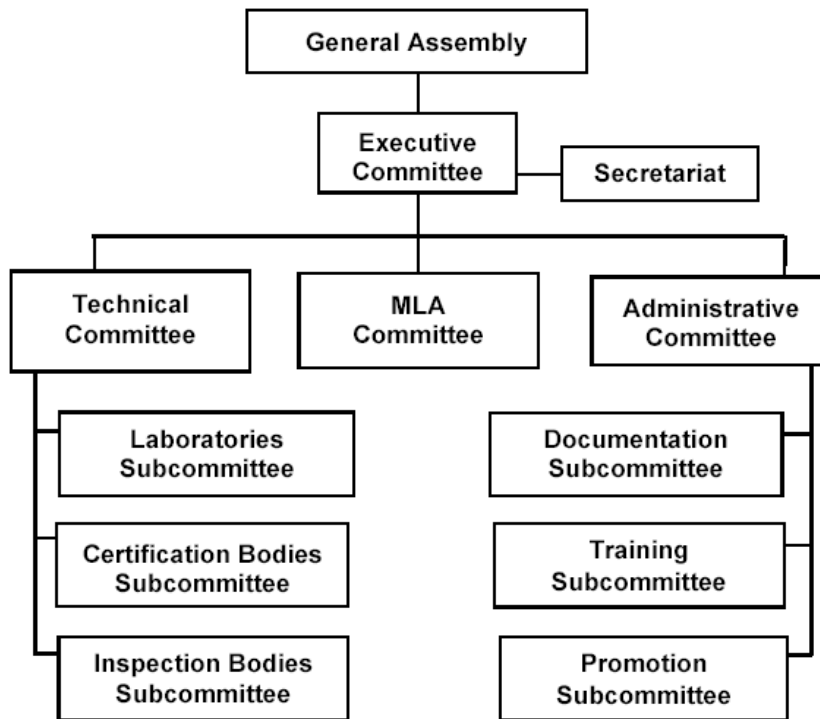


Fig. 1 — IAAC organizational structure.

CHAPTER 4 MEMBERSHIP

Article 4.1 IAAC has three membership categories:

- a) Full Members: All accreditation bodies of third party conformity assessment bodies, legally established and operating in nations or blocs of nations of the American region that declare and demonstrate, according to the procedure for new membership applications, that they operate according to the requirements of ISO/IEC guides and standards and relevant international documents, are eligible to become full members of the IAAC.
- b) Associate Members:
 - Accreditation bodies established in the nations of the American Region that do not yet operate according to the requirements of ISO/IEC guides and standards and relevant international documents.



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- Nations or blocs of nations of the region of the Americas that do not have an established accreditation body.
 - Other international, regional and national organizations that are interested in conformity assessment and are not included in the following paragraph (letter c)
- c) Stakeholder Members: Certification / registration bodies, inspection bodies, and/or testing and calibration laboratories that are accredited or in the process of being accredited by IAAC's full members, business entities, or other users of conformity assessment services in the region.

Article 4.2 Full members have the following rights:

- a) To designate its representatives in the General Assembly, committees and subcommittees, according to the corresponding Terms of Reference;
- b) To elect IAAC's Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer, as well as Chairs and Vice-Chairs of committees and subcommittees;
- c) To be elected by the General Assembly as IAAC's Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer, as well as Chair and Vice-Chair of committees and subcommittees;
- d) To participate in the General Assembly meetings, where they may present proposals and shall have a voice and vote.
- e) To represent IAAC, according to the decisions of the General Assembly;
- f) To participate in activities of committees and subcommittees with voice and vote according to the corresponding Terms of Reference;
- g) To receive copies and/or have access to IAAC documents.

Article 4.3 Associate members have the following rights:

- a) To designate its representatives in the General Assembly, committees and subcommittees, according to the corresponding Terms of Reference;

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- b) To participate in General Assembly meetings, where they shall have voice but no vote;
- c) To be elected as Chair and Vice-Chair of the IAAC Management Committee's subcommittees;
- d) To participate in the activities of the subcommittees according to the corresponding Terms of Reference;
- e) To receive copies and/or have access to IAAC's general documents; and
- f) To elect two representative to participate in the Executive Committee for a term of two years with the right to be reelected for a second consecutive term.

Article 4.4 Stakeholder Members have the following rights:

- a) To nominate its representatives in the General Assembly;
- b) To participate in General Assembly meetings, where they will have voice but no vote;
- c) To participate in the activities of the subcommittees according to their Terms of Reference;
- d) To receive copies and/or have access to IAAC's general documents;
- e) To elect two representatives to participate in the Executive Committee for a term of two years with the right to be reelected to a second consecutive term; and
- f) To establish committees that represent the interests of those accredited by IAAC members and the interests of the users of conformity assessment services, with their corresponding subcommittees, upon prior approval of corresponding Terms of Reference and Work Program by the General Assembly.

Article 4.5 Full Members have the following obligations:

- a) To sign IAAC's MoU;
- b) To contribute to the objectives of IAAC;

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- c) To comply with these Bylaws and other applicable procedures;
- d) To provide technical and administrative support to the Chair and Vice-Chair so they may adequately fulfill their responsibilities within IAAC, when said Chair and Vice-Chair belong to their organization;
- e) To promote the adoption of General Assembly resolutions;
- f) To complete actions geared toward signing IAAC's MLA;
- g) To invite the representatives of national accredited conformity assessment bodies or in process of accreditation to participate in IAAC if deemed necessary; and
- h) To pay the fees established by IAAC's General Assembly.

Article 4.6 Associate Members and Stakeholders Members have the following obligations:

- a) To contribute to the objectives of IAAC;
- b) To comply with these Bylaws and with other applicable procedures; and
- c) To pay the fees established by IAAC's General Assembly.

Article 4.7 The admission of new members requires a written request, addressed to IAAC's Secretariat. Following the corresponding procedure, the Executive Committee will issue a recommendation to IAAC's General Assembly, who will decide regarding the acceptance of new members. This may be done by ballot either during the General Assembly or by email/postal ballot with a period of one month for return of votes.

Article 4.8 A member may terminate its membership due to the following reasons:

- a) By a member's own decision.
- b) Due to non fulfillment of a member's obligations, upon previous approval by a simple majority of votes at the General Assembly; or
- c) Because the member's conduct is considered contrary to IAAC's objectives, upon previous approval by a simple majority of votes at the General Assembly.



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Article 4.9 If the decision concerning membership does not satisfy the body, it has the right to an appeal according to the corresponding appeals procedure.

CHAPTER 5 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 5.1 The General Assembly is IAAC's highest authority. It is comprised of the representatives of each full, associate and Stakeholder members, as well as other related bodies invited by the Chair.

Article 5.2 The General Assembly has authority:

- a) To elect the Chair and Vice-Chair from the Full Members;
- b) To elect the Treasurer and Executive Secretary;
- c) To define and/or approve the policies and strategic plan of IAAC;
- d) To approve IAAC's structure, and create and dissolve committees and subcommittees;
- e) To approve the Terms of Reference of the committees and subcommittees and the Working Programs;
- f) To elect the Chair and Vice-Chair of the committees and subcommittees;
- g) To approve and amend these Bylaws and the MoU;
- h) To review and approve the reports of the Chair, the Executive Committee, committees and subcommittees;
- i) To approve and adopt resolutions;
- j) To ratify the signatories of IAAC's MLAs;
- k) To approve the admission of new members with 2/3 of the votes of full members; and
- l) To approve IAAC's fees, financial status, and annual budget.
- m) To cancel the membership of a full or associate member as is described in Article 4.8



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Article 5.3 The General Assembly:

- a) Shall meet normally once a year;
- b) Shall meet extraordinarily, in the event of exceptional circumstances, as requested by IAAC's Chair or by a request of two thirds of its full members;
- c) Shall have quorum and begin its meeting when a simple majority of its full members is present, whether in person or by its proxy;
- d) Shall adopt resolutions by consensus, if this is not achieved, they will be adopted by an affirmative vote of two thirds of full members present;
- e) May adopt resolutions between meetings according to Article 11.6 of these Bylaws as decided by the General Assembly, or when IAAC's Chair deems it necessary.

Article 5.4 Full members are entitled to a single vote, whether in person or by proxy. A single vote is considered for each country.

Article 5.5 Member voting by proxy will not be accepted on any new issues submitted during the General Assembly meeting.

CHAPTER 6 IAAC CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR AND TREASURER

Article 6.1 It is the Chair's responsibility:

- a) To represent IAAC at other national, regional, and international organizations of interest;
- b) To chair IAAC's General Assembly and Executive Committee;
- c) To coordinate the implementation of all actions approved by the General Assembly;
- d) To sign agreements approved by IAAC's General Assembly; and
- e) To invite persons or organizations on his/her own initiative or suggested by the General Assembly, Executive Committee, or other committee to participate in all or part of IAAC's General Assembly or Executive Committee meetings.



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- f) In consultation with Full and Associate Members, to decide the date and place of meetings of the General Assembly.

Article 6.2 It is the Vice-Chair's responsibility:

- a) To permanently assist the Chair in his/her accomplishment of its duties;
- b) To substitute for the Chair in his/her absence or impediment; and
- c) To collaborate with the Chair in representing IAAC issues to other organizations.

Article 6.3 It is the Treasurer's responsibility to:

- a) To prepare IAAC's financial status report for its approval by the General Assembly;
- b) To propose to the General Assembly the budget for the following year showing the expected income generated by fees and other types of services or by expected projects, as well as the expenses which include administrative expenses, Secretariat costs, fees to other bodies, publications and promotion expenses;
- c) To propose to the General Assembly a new structure of payments, in case it is deemed necessary; and
- d) To handle the financial audits when the General Assembly so determines and propose actions for the best management of IAAC's financial resources.

CHAPTER 7 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Article 7.1 The Executive Committee is constituted and operates according to the corresponding Terms of Reference approved by the General Assembly.



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CHAPTER 8

S E C R E T A R I A T

Article 8.1 It is the responsibility of IAAC's Executive Secretary to:

- a) To prepare and submit for approval to the corresponding members, the agenda of the General Assembly and the Executive Committee meetings with one month in advance;
- b) To send out to the corresponding members, the invitations and the documents to be discussed in the General Assembly and Executive Committee meetings;
- c) To organize the logistics of meetings;
- d) To assist the Chair at meetings;
- e) To prepare the draft of the minutes of the General Assembly and Executive Committee meetings;
- f) To distribute the minutes of the General Assembly and Executive Committee meetings for their approval and, once approved, file them;
- g) To keep the IAAC membership directory updated;
- h) To maintain a system for documents and records control;
- i) To keep the resolutions of the General Assembly and Executive Committee meetings, assign them a consecutive number followed by the year of approval;
- j) To organize the logistics of the meetings;
- k) To keep the members informed about major issues submitted to the Secretariat between General Assembly meetings;
- l) To receive and answer correspondence sent to IAAC; and
- m) To maintain the IAAC website updated.



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CHAPTER 9 COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES

Article 9.1 The committees and subcommittees will be constituted and will operate according to the Terms of Reference and Working Programs approved by the General Assembly.

CHAPTER 10 ELECTION OF OFFICIALS

Article 10.1 Candidates to the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer shall be notified to the IAAC Secretariat, at least three months before the election. Nominations may be made by full members. Candidates shall provide an official letter of support from his/her organization and an outline of the work plan for its candidacy.

Article 10.2 The IAAC Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer shall be elected for a two-year term and may be reelected for a second consecutive term.

Article 10.3 Voting may be by acclamation or by ballot. The candidates that obtain the most votes shall be immediately considered as elected.

Article 10.4 The Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer shall assume their responsibilities effective once the General Assembly meeting at which they were elected concludes.

Article 10.5 In the event that the person serving as IAAC Chair or chair of a committee or subcommittee can not continue to serve in that capacity, he or she shall be replaced by the Vice-Chair until the next General Assembly meeting during which a new Chair shall be elected.

Article 10.6 When the person serving as IAAC Vice-Chair or Treasurer, or as Vice-Chair of a committee or subcommittee can not continue to serve in that capacity, he/she shall be replaced by a person appointed by the Executive Committee, until the next General Assembly meeting, during which a new Vice-Chair and Treasurer shall be elected.

Article 10.7 The Chair and Vice-Chair of a committee or subcommittee shall be elected for a two year term and may be reelected for a second consecutive term.



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Article 10.8 The Executive Secretary shall be elected by the General Assembly on the proposal of the Chair and ratified by the Executive Committee.

CHAPTER 11 GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 11.1 All substantial policy decisions made during meetings of IAAC's committees and subcommittees shall be issued as resolutions.

Article 11.2 The resolutions issued by the Executive Committee and other committees shall be approved by the General Assembly.

Article 11.3 The General Assembly resolutions shall be in English, Portuguese and Spanish.

Article 11.4 These Bylaws and the IAAC MoU may be amended by the General Assembly.

Article 11.5 Any issues not covered by these Bylaws will be resolved by the Executive Committee, pending ratification by the General Assembly.

Article 11.6 If there is a need to submit a document for approval by the IAAC members, between General Assembly meetings, the Secretariat will submit said document to be voted on, and send it by mail or e-mail for a period of 60 days.

Article 11.7 Any goods donated to IAAC for its technical activities shall remain in the custody of the Secretariat.

Article 11.8 The decisions of the General Assembly referenced in Articles 11.2, 11.4, 11.5 and 11.6 shall be voted on according to Articles 5.3 and 5.4. of these Bylaws



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CHAPTER 12

DISSOLUTION OF IAAC

Article 12.1 The General Assembly may determine the dissolution of IAAC only if it has been specifically convened for this purpose and if it is approved by an affirmative vote of two thirds of its full members.