



Inter American Accreditation Cooperation

IAAC Chair report 2010-2011

This report includes IAAC activities from the 15th General Assembly held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in August 2010, until this 16th IAAC General Assembly, which is being held here today, on August 26, 2011, in Quito, Ecuador.

Each year we come together to review the work and progress achieved in developing and strengthening the region's accreditation systems. At each annual meeting we witness a long list of milestones that measure the advancement of our Cooperation, and on this occasion we have a special event to celebrate.

IAAC International Recognition

On May 5th, 2011, IAAC reached a highly significant goal as a Regional Cooperation. I feel very proud as Chair to emphasize that IAAC was accepted as a signatory to the Multi-lateral Recognition Arrangement of the International Accreditation Forum, (IAF), for the scopes of Environmental Management Systems Certification Bodies and Product Certification Bodies. We add these two scopes to the recognized scopes that IAAC already has, which include Quality Management Systems Certification Bodies as well as Testing and Calibration Laboratories.

All members have provided significant contributions to achieve this recognition, which represents a culmination of years of intense work developing policies and procedures according to international practices, participating in the MLA process receiving peer evaluations and witnessings, acting as peer evaluators, making decisions on evaluation reports, promoting actions for improvement, and sharing experiences to develop the Cooperation for the benefit of the Region.

The IAAC members who are already MLA signatories for the scopes of EMS and Product automatically may become IAF MLA signatories for said scopes without having to go through an additional evaluation, as long as they are also IAF members.

New IAAC members

ABROC of Brazil was accepted as a Stakeholder member and approved by the IAAC General Assembly via electronic ballot on April 15, 2011. We welcome ABROC as a new Stakeholder.

IAAC Membership

IAAC currently has a total of 42 members from 22 countries in the Americas. 23 are full members, 7 are associate members and 12 are stakeholders.

IAAC MLA Group

The IAAC MLA Group has a total of 18 accreditation bodies that are IAAC MLA signatories. IAAC has 17 signatories for the scope of Testing Laboratories, 11 for calibration laboratories, 10 for quality management systems, 7 for environmental management systems, 8 for Product Certification Bodies and 5 for Inspection Bodies.



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IAAC is currently in process of obtaining recognition as a Regional Cooperation signatory to the ILAC MRA for the scope of Inspection Bodies. An ILAC evaluation team has already carried out a witnessing of two IAAC peer evaluations, the first one of ECA, Costa Rica, in January 2011, and the second of OGA, Guatemala in June 2011. The ILAC team observed via Skype the MLA Group meeting held in Quito, Ecuador, on August 21, 2011, in particular the decision making process of the scope of Inspection Bodies. The ILAC team will also carry out an evaluation of the IAAC Secretariat.

In August 2010, the IAAC General Assembly agreed to extend the MLA to include the scope of persons certification bodies according to the ISO/IEC 17024 standard. The MLA Committee and Certification Bodies Subcommittee have already started with the implementation plans for this scope. During this MLA Group meeting it was decided that IAAC shall extend the MLA scopes to include the following fields:

- Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS), according to ISO/IEC 17021, ISO 22003, and ISO 22000 at level 5.
- Information Security Management Systems (ISMS), according to ISO/IEC 17021, ISO 27006 and ISO 27001 at level 5.
- Green House Gas Emissions (Gases Efecto Invernadero), according to all of the relevant standards.
- Proficiency Testing Providers, according to ISO/IEC 17043.
- Reference Material producers, according to ISO/IEC Guide 34, in combination with ISO/IEC 17025.

We congratulate the following IAAC members who were accepted as IAAC MLA signatories:

Yesterday the Multi-lateral Recognition Arrangements of the following accreditation bodies were signed:

- OAE of Ecuador was accepted as a signatory to the IAAC MLA for the scopes of Testing and Calibration Laboratories (ISO/IEC 17025); Quality Management Systems (ISO/IEC 17021); Product Certification Bodies (ISO/IEC Guide 65); and Inspection Bodies (ISO/IEC 17020).
- ONA of Paraguay was accepted as a signatory to the IAAC MLA for the scopes of Testing Laboratories (ISO/IEC 17025); Product Certification Bodies (ISO/IEC Guide 65); and Inspection Bodies (ISO/IEC 17020).
- ECA of Costa Rica was accepted as a signatory to the IAAC MLA for the scope of Product Certification Bodies (ISO/IEC Guide 65); and Inspection Bodies (ISO/IEC 17020).

Additionally we congratulate the following accreditation bodies for signing the MLA for the scope of Inspection Bodies. They had already been approved by the General Assembly last year, but a minimum of three signatories were needed before the MLA certificate could be signed:

EMA of México for Inspection Bodies.

A2LA of United States for Inspection Bodies.



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Also the following members had already been approved via electronic ballot by the MLA Group:

ECA of Costa Rica, as an MLA signatory for the scope of Quality Management Systems Certification Bodies in January 2011.

OUA of Uruguay, as an MLA signatory for the scopes of Environmental Management Systems and Quality Management Systems Certification Bodies, in January 2011.

IAAC Strategic Plan

During this General Assembly we will review the progress achieved on the 2008-2011 IAAC Strategic Plan in order to confirm that we are reaching our goals and we will establish new objectives for the next year. We already have the new approved strategic plan for 2011-2015 which we will begin to use from now on.

Training

The 2011 IAAC training program includes the following training activities:

- Workshop on “Experience Exchange on Best Practices in Accreditation”, sponsored by PTB of Germany, was held in Quito, Ecuador from August 19-20, 2011.
- Workshop on the “Development and operation of Proficiency Testing schemes”, sponsored by PTB of Germany, was held in Bogota, Colombia from August 16-18, 2011.
- Workshop on the implementation of ISO/IEC 17021, sponsored by the OAS, was held in Mexico City in June 14-15, 2011.
- Peer evaluator training workshop for new peer evaluators was held in Lima, Peru, on April 13-15, 2011. 30 peer evaluators from the Region were trained, and a representative from the APLAC Region.
- Peer evaluator training workshop for experienced peer evaluators was held in Washington, D.C., USA, on February 22, 2011. 24 peer evaluators were trained.

Technical Cooperation Projects

2007-2011 OAS Project

This year IAAC concluded the last phase of a four year technical cooperation project sponsored by the Organization of American States, (OAS), for accreditation bodies in developing countries in the Americas. The last phase was from August 2010 until June 2011. This four year project was successfully managed by Cgcre of Brazil with the support of the IAAC Secretariat.

2009-2010 PTB Project

IAAC currently maintains its technical cooperation project sponsored by the Physikalisch Technische Bundesanstalt, (PTB), of Germany which includes workshops on Good Practices in Accreditation Proficiency Testing activities, and support to carry out the international evaluations of IAAC and witnessing of IAAC evaluations.



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IAAC is currently developing a new project together with PTB; and jointly with the Inter-American Metrology System, (SIM); and the Panamerican Technical Standards Cooperation, (COPANT), for developing quality infrastructure in the Americas with a focus on energy efficiency and renewable energies. A survey was distributed to identify the needs of the region and representatives from the organizations attended a workshop to draft the project objectives and plan of actions, which was held in Xérem, Brazil, in May 2011.

The IAAC Chair participated in a seminar on the impact of accreditation in Santiago, Chile, in April 2011, which included presentations in the field of metrology. The accreditation bodies were encouraged to carry out impact studies. Currently there are 3 accreditation bodies that have expressed an interest in developing them.

INTER-INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

Cooperation with International and Regional Organizations

Cooperation with ILAC:

Beatriz Garcia, IAAC Chair, participated in the ILAC Executive Committee meetings held in Istanbul, Turkey, in June 2011, and in Shanghai, China, in October 2010.

Ileana Martinez, IAAC Vice-Chair, participated in the ILAC Executive Committee meetings held in London, in March 2011.

Ileana Martinez, IAAC Vice-Chair, was elected Chair of ILAC ARC in Shanghai, China, in October 2010, and as such, participates in the ILAC Executive Committee meetings.

Peter Unger, ILAC Chair, attended the IAAC meetings held in Washington, D.C., USA, in February 2011 and joins us here in these meetings in Ecuador.

Cooperation with IAF:

Beatriz Garcia, IAAC Chair, participated in the IAF Executive Committee meetings held in Istanbul, Turkey, in June 2011, and in Shanghai, China, in October 2010.

Randy Dougherty, IAF Chair, now joins us here in these meetings in Ecuador.

IAAC provides regional evaluators for IAF evaluations of the regions and non affiliated bodies.

A IAAC representative from OAE, Ecuador, will attend a training course on ISO/IEC 17024 to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, in November 2011.

Cooperation with PAC:

Belinda Mort, PAC Secretary, attended the IAAC Executive Committee, MLA Group and MLA Committee meetings held in Washington, D.C., USA, in February 2011, and joins us today at this meeting.

The IAAC and PAC Chairs, Vice-Chairs, MLA Chairs, and Secretaries held a meeting to discuss Regional cooperation issues and joint activities in Shanghai, PRC, in October 2010.



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Cooperation with APLAC:

Michael Fraser, APLAC Secretary, attended the IAAC Executive Committee, MLA Group and MLA Committee meetings held in Washington, D.C., USA, in February 2011, and joins us today at this meeting.

The IAAC and APLAC Chairs, Vice-Chairs, MLA Chairs, Committee Chairs and Secretaries held a meeting to discuss Regional cooperation issues and joint activities in Shanghai, PRC, in October 2010.

Laboratories of 10 APLAC members and 1 SADCA and AFRAC member participated in the IAAC regional proficiency testing program on Preservatives in Non-alcoholic Beverages carried out by INTI / OAA of Argentina. The PT concluded in December 2010.

IAAC invited APLAC members to participate in the T006 Proficiency Test for Sugar Analysis and T007 Proficiency Test for Powdered Milk. APLAC has invited IAAC members to participate in its proficiency testing programs during 2010 and 2011.

A IAAC representative from Cgcre, Brazil, will attend a training course on Statistical Methods for PT in New Delhi, India on 11- 13 October, 2011, hosted by APLAC and NABL.

Cooperation with EA:

Graham Talbot, EA Chair, attended the IAAC General Assembly meetings held in Rio de Janeiro, in August 2010, and joins us today at this meeting. Ileana Martinez, IAAC Vice-Chair, participated as the IAAC representative during the 1st EA General Assembly. IAAC regularly receives EA documents that are distributed for comments or vote.

Cooperation with SADCA:

IAAC invited SADCA members to participate in the T006 Proficiency Test for Sugar Analysis and T007 Proficiency Test for Powdered Milk.

Laboratories of one SADCA member participated in the IAAC regional proficiency testing program on Preservatives in Non-alcoholic Beverages carried out by INTI / OAA of Argentina. The PT concluded in December 2010.

IAAC Proficiency Testing programs

IAAC T007 Proficiency Test for Powdered Milk

An IAAC regional proficiency testing program on powdered milk is being carried out by INTI and OAA of Argentina. The samples were sent out in May 2011 to participating laboratories of IAAC, APLAC, AFRAC and SADCA members.

IAAC T006 Proficiency Test for Sugar Analysis

An IAAC regional proficiency testing program on sugar analysis is being carried out by OGA of Guatemala. The samples were sent out in April 2011 to participating laboratories of IAAC, APLAC, AFRAC and SADCA members.



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IAAC Documentation

During this year, we have updated our basic IAAC documents according to the current operation of the Cooperation and harmonized with the international requirements.

IAAC has a new category of mandatory documents which include IAAC, ILAC and IAF mandatory documents for the MLA. The documents may be downloaded from the IAAC website at www.iaac.org.mx

Also we have developed and approved a large number of forms that we use in operation of the MLA process. Now we have a new procedure for records management. The document translation work is a constant challenge that we must face to have our documents updated in at least 2 languages.

Thank you very much,

Quito, Ecuador, August 2011