



APLAC

Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation

APLAC is an organisation of accreditation bodies in the Asia Pacific area that have expressed a desire to cooperate in fostering the development of competent laboratories, inspection bodies and reference material producers in member economies.

Cooperation is to include:

- Exchange of information
- Joint training programs
- Proficiency testing
- Harmonisation of requirements
- Mutual recognition of systems meeting harmonised requirements

APLAC NEWS NOTES is published four times a year to facilitate the exchange of information among members and interested parties. It is not copyrighted and may be reproduced in full. Excerpts should reference APLAC News Notes specifically. Wide copying and distribution are encouraged.

APLAC also maintains a web site at:

www.aplac.org

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FROM THE SECRETARIAT

A most successful week of APLAC 2009 meetings has just concluded in Bali, Indonesia (5-11 December). Congratulations and a big thank you to Kukuh Achmed and the hardworking and friendly KAN staff for organising the program of meetings and very enjoyable social events. Our special thanks and best wishes for the future go to Dr Sunarya, who has recently retired as Secretary-General of KAN and who, unfortunately, was prevented from attending because of a death in his immediate family.

We were pleased to have the EA Chair, Graham Talbot and the PAC Secretary, Belinda Mort, attend for the week. Ralf Egner of DAKKS (Germany) attended the MRA Council and General Assembly meetings in his role as team leader for the ILAC evaluation of APLAC.

Congratulations go to the following members:

- SLAB (Sri Lanka) on being accepted into the APLAC MRA for testing and ISO 15189
- NSC-ONAC (Thailand) on the extension of its APLAC MRA signatory status to include inspection and the continuation of its signatory status for testing and calibration
- TAF (Chinese Taipei) on the continuation of its signatory status in the APLAC MRA for testing, calibration, inspection and ISO 15189
- ema (Mexico) on the continuation of its signatory status

in the APLAC MRA for testing, calibration, inspection and ISO 15189

- CALA (Canada) on the continuation of its signatory status in the APLAC MRA for testing
- JAS-ANZ (Australasia) on the continuation of its signatory status in the APLAC MRA for inspection

The series of meetings that form APLAC 2009 were most successful. Our thanks especially to the 4 new committee Chairs, Zhang Mingxia, Trace McInturff, Dan Tholen and Alan Patterson, who successfully met the challenge of chairing their meetings and all the tasks associated with that.

Our congratulations to Nigel Jou (TAF) and Chang Kwei Fern (SAC) who were elected to the APLAC Board of Management for a 2 year term, starting on 1 January 2010. We thank very much Dr Katuo Seta (IAJapan) for his excellent contributions during his term on the APLAC BoM that ends on 31 December 2009.

The APLAC General Assembly endorsed the APLAC budget 2010 that includes funding for 3 training courses in 2010 and USD 70,000.00 funding for the conduct of APLAC PT programs in 2010.

A 2 day training course on ISO/IEC 17011 will be held in Seoul, Korea on 10 and 11 May 2010.

Continued on page 2

This course is aimed at staff of new member bodies and new staff from more established member bodies who wish to become more familiar with the key Standard that governs the operation of accreditation bodies. A 3 day training course on the recently issued ISO/IEC 17043 will be held in Chinese Taipei sometime in the period September to November 2010, hosted by TAF. As an updated version of ISO Guide 34 has just been published, a 3 day training course on the new version will be held in Beijing sometime in the period June to August 2010, hosted by CNAS.

Immediately following the ISO/IEC

17011 training course in Seoul the mid-year APLAC MRA Council meeting will be held on 12 and 13 May, followed by the mid-year meeting of the APLAC Board of Management on 14 and 15 May.

Members are advised when new or revised APLAC documents are placed on the APLAC web site. Updates since September include:

- TR 002, issue 1
- TR 003, issue 1
- SEC 039, issue 26....
- Two reports on completed APLAC PT programs (in the "members only" area)
- The report on the 3rd APLAC/PTB Proficiency Testing Work-

shop and Symposium (in the "members only" area)

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to APLAC in 2009 and helped make it such a successful year. Special thanks to the APLAC Chair, Terence Chan, and the BoM members who guide us all while doing their "real" full time jobs as well!

We wish everyone a peaceful festive season and all the very best for 2010 and the Year of the Tiger.

Helen Liddy, Michael Fraser and Janet Clark
APLAC Secretariat

AIHA LAP, LLC IMPROVES COMMUNICATION

AIHA Laboratory Accreditation Programs, LLC has adopted the following approaches aimed at improving communications with and about its accredited laboratories:

Revised Accreditation Logos

AIHA LAP, LLC modified its accreditation logos (for conformity assessment bodies) and is now making the new logos available to its accredited laboratories. The updated logos now include language stating that AIHA LAP, LLC-accredited laboratories are compliant with ISO/IEC 17025:2005. The AIHA LAP, LLC Licensing Agreement and advertising policies have also been updated to include language that specifies that all uses of the logo must be accompanied by the laboratory-specific identification number, which must appear directly beneath the accreditation logo. The revised policy and Licensing Agreement were sent to all AIHA-accredited laboratories

along with sample images of the revised logos in November. After signing the Agreement, laboratories will receive digital images of the logo for their immediate use on laboratory reports and marketing materials. All AIHA-accredited laboratories must use the new logo by July 2010.

Web Site Changes

AIHA LAP, LLC also recently redesigned and upgraded its website, which can be found at www.aihaaccreditedlabs.org. In addition to the site's newer, fresher look, laboratories and their customers will now find specific laboratory information by each laboratory's unique identification number since they now have to be used in conjunction with the logo. We are also posting all scanned copies of each laboratory's AIHA-issued certificate and scope page(s) so that users of the site can access more complete information about each accredited



laboratory.

E-news

Finally, AIHA LAP, LLC replaced its legacy newsletter with Laboratory Accreditation Programs (LAP) E-News, which allows its laboratory customers to get information in a more timely manner. Copies of the archived e-news will be posted on the AIHA LAP, LLC website. So far, the feedback on the electronic publication has been very positive.

For more information about the logos, the website or e-news, contact Sage Morgante at smorgante@aiha.org.

IAAC NEWS

IAAC MLA Scope Extension

The Inter American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC) has submitted an application to extend its IAF MLA for the scopes of accreditation of Product and Environmental Management Systems Certification Bodies, and for Inspection Bodies. Currently, IAAC is a Regional Cooperation Body signatory of the ILAC MRA with a scope in Testing and Calibration Laboratories, and also a signatory of the IAF MLA with a scope in QMS.

IAAC has started operating MLAs for the scopes of EMS Certification Bodies, Product Certification Bodies and Inspection Bodies.

The ILAC-IAF evaluation team leader performed an evaluation of the IAAC MLA Group, and the MLA Committee, on August 29-30, 2009 and also evaluated the IAAC Secretariat on September 1-2, 2009, in Costa Rica.

New Signatories of the IAAC MLA

NVLAP of the USA was accepted as a signatory to the IAAC MLA for calibration and testing laboratories (ISO/IEC 17025), on August 30th, 2009.

Signatories of the IAAC MLA

For Testing and Calibration Laboratories (11)

- Argentina - OAA
- Brazil - Cgre/INMETRO
- Canada - SCC
- Costa Rica - ECA (Testing only)
- Cuba - ONARC
- Guatemala – OGA (Testing only)
- Mexico - ema
- USA - A2LA
- USA – ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board, Doing business as ACLASS
- USA – ASCLD-LAB (Testing only)
- USA – NVLAP

For Quality Management Systems

Certification Bodies (6)

- Argentina - OAA
- Brazil - Cgre/INMETRO

- Canada - SCC
- Mexico - ema
- Peru - INDECOPI/SNA
- USA – ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board, Doing business as ANAB

For Environmental Management Systems Certification Bodies (5)

- Argentina – OAA
- Brazil – Cgcre/Inmetro
- Canada – SCC
- Mexico – ema
- USA – ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board, Doing business as ANAB

For Product Certification Bodies (4)

- Argentina – OAA
- Brazil – Cgcre/Inmetro
- Canada – SCC
- Mexico – ema

The IAAC MLA signatories for the scope of Testing Laboratories based on ISO/IEC 17025 which also include the scope of ISO 15189 for clinical/medical laboratories are the following: OAA of Argentina, SCC of Canada, OGA of Guatemala, ema of Mexico, and A2LA of USA.

IAAC Membership

IAAC currently has a total of 41 members from 23 countries in the Americas. 21 are full members, 9 are associate members and 11 are stakeholders.

CERTINTEX of Peru joined IAAC as a new Stakeholder member on September 4th, 2009.

The following IAAC members changed their names and signed the IAAC MOU once again:

- American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) to American Industrial Hygiene Association - Laboratory Accreditation Program, LLC., (AIHA-LAP).
- Forensic Quality Services International (FQSI) to Forensic Quality Services (FQS).

- INDECOPI-CRT, of Peru, to INDECOPI-SNA, of Peru.

IAAC Officers

During the annual meeting held in September 2009 in Costa Rica, the IAAC General Assembly elected new officers for the Training Subcommittee. The current list of IAAC officers is as follows:

- IAAC Chair, Beatriz Garcia of OAA (Argentina)
- IAAC Vice-Chair, Ileana Martinez of NVLAP-NIST (USA)
- Interim Treasurer, Keith Greenway of ANSI-ASQ Nat. Acc. Board DbA ACLASS (USA)
- MLA Committee Chair, Mauricio Soares of Cgcre/Inmetro (Brazil)
- MLA Committee Vice-Chair, Alexander Pineda of OGA (Guatemala)
- Technical Committee Chair, Johanna Acuña of ECA (Costa Rica)
- Technical Committee Vice Chair, Peter Unger of A2LA (USA)
- Laboratories Subcommittee Chair, Bertha Munguia of A2LA (USA)
- Laboratories Subcommittee Vice Chair, Barbara J. Belzer of NVLAP (USA)
- Certification Bodies Subcommittee Chair, Ignacio Guerreiro of OAA (Argentina)
- Certification Bodies Subcommittee Vice-Chair, Steve Cross of SCC (Canada)
- Inspection Bodies Subcommittee Chair, Eduardo Ceballos of INN (Chile)
- Inspection Bodies Subcommittee Vice-Chair, Sergio Hurtado of ema (Mexico)
- Management Committee Chair, Elizabeth Tejeda of ema (Mexico)
- Management Committee Vice-Chair, Cynthia Jimenez of ECA (Costa Rica)
- Training Subcommittee Chair, Andrea Jimenez of ema (Mexico)
- Training Subcommittee Vice-Chair, Nicolas Molina of DTA-IBMETRO (Bolivia)
- Promotions Subcommittee Chair, Jo Ann Given of ASCLD-LAB (USA)

Continued on page 4

- Promotions Subcommittee Vice-Chair, Sandra Saraiva of Cgcre/Inmetro (Brazil)
- Documentation Subcommittee Chair, Maria Miranda of ONARC (Cuba)
- Documentation Subcommittee Vice-Chair, Liliane Somma of OUA (Uruguay)

IAAC Proficiency Testing Programs

IAAC T005 Proficiency Test for preservatives in non-alcoholic beverages. An IAAC regional proficiency testing program on preservatives analysis in non alcoholic beverages is being organized by OAA/INTI of Argentina and will be starting soon. Invitations will be sent to IAAC, APLAC and SADCA members.

IAAC T004 Proficiency Test for Wine. An IAAC regional proficiency testing program

on wine analysis is being carried out by DTA-IBMETRO of Bolivia. Registration began in April 2009 and the distribution of samples is currently underway. This program includes laboratories from the IAAC and APLAC regions.

IAAC T003 Proficiency Test for Fatty Acids. An IAAC regional proficiency testing program on Fatty Acids composition in Vegetable Oil is being carried out by OAA/INTI of Argentina. This program began in November 2008 and the preliminary report is being finalized. Laboratories from the IAAC region as well as laboratories from 8 APLAC members have participated, and laboratories from 2 SADCA members.

IAAC T002 Proficiency Test for Thermocouples. An IAAC regional proficiency testing program on Type K Thermocouples,

organized by ECA, Costa Rica, and NVLAP of USA. This program began in April 2009 and is currently underway. This program includes laboratories from the IAAC, APLAC and SADCA regions.

IAAC Meetings

The IAAC 33rd Executive Committee, MLA Committee and Laboratories Subcommittee meetings will be held in Montevideo, Uruguay, in March 22-24, 2010.

IAAC Information and Publications

Information on members and IAAC documents is available at the IAAC website: www.iaac.org.mx.

IAAC 33rd Executive Committee, MLA Committee and Laboratories Subcommittee meetings will be held in Montevideo, Uruguay, in March 22-24, 2010.

SADCA REPORT TO APLAC

SADCA

SADCA Training

Some years ago funding was secured to train experts from the SADC region in technical assessment techniques. From this group of trainees the first four SADC assessors have been qualified and are now ready to conduct assessments on behalf of SADCAS. Two of the four assessors have already been included in SANAS assessment teams as the technical assessors.

A training course on World Trade, Conformity Assessment and Accreditation Requirements was conducted during November 2009 for all the NAFFPs, SADCA members, SADCAS staff and SADCAS Board members. During this week of training, the ILAC MCC also conducted a marketing workshop for the delegates. The members expressed their appreciation to ILAC for making the marketing workshop possible and found the workshop very informative and beneficial.

SADC / EU Project

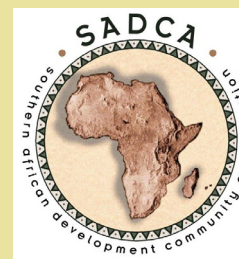
SADCA members had identified a large number of experts to be trained as future technical and lead assessors for SADCAS. The theoretical training of these experts had already taken place and the training in technical assessing techniques is currently underway. During 2010 some of these SADC trainee technical assessors would be furthering their training by going on attachment training. Potential lead assessors would be identified from the group of technical assessors and would receive training in the duties of a lead assessor. A peer evaluation course is also scheduled for early 2010.

In addition to the above training and before completion on the EU project, it is envisaged that two train-the-trainer training courses would also be conducted.

SADCA PROJECTS

SADCAS Launch

SADCAS was officially launched on 23 April 2009 in Gaborone, Botswana and was officiated by Honourable Daniel Neo Moroka, the Botswana Minister of Trade and Industry. The launch was graced by dignitaries from SADC Member States, diplomats from various countries including Ambassador Hildan from the Norwegian Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa and the SADC Executive Secretary, Dr Tomaz Salomão. In conjunction with the launch, a Memorandum of Understanding [MoU] on general cooperation was signed between SADC and SADCAS. The MoU formalizes the operational relationship between SADC and SADCAS.



Continued on page 5

Twinning Partnership Agreement

SADCAS and SANAS signed a Twinning Partnership agreement on 03 December 2009. The two accreditation bodies will work together to accelerate the development of the technical and managerial capabilities of the SADCAS' staff and strengthen their cooperation in areas that are of mutual interest and benefit to both parties and the SADC common agenda.

SADCAS recognizes SANAS, as an ILAC/ IAF multilateral agreement signatory, as having the levels of expertise and resources in areas of operation benefi-

cial to SADCAS and as an appropriate twinning partner to provide technical and managerial assistance in accreditation services and accreditation related services to SADCAS.

SADCAS Publications

The fourth edition of the SADCAS newsletter, "The Pioneer", has just been published and will soon be available on the SADCA website, www.sadca.org

3. INTERNATIONAL LIAISON

The SADCA Chairperson, SADCA Regional Coordinator and SADCAS CEO

continue to attend ILAC and IAF meetings.

In December 2009, Singapore became the first non-OECD country in Asia to be admitted into the OECD MAD framework for GLP. This means that local companies can now meet the regulatory requirements of OECD member states by demonstrating GLP compliance for their non-clinical studies or products. This will result in faster access to market for new chemicals, including vaccines and drugs that are developed and tested locally.

NATA RE-SIGNS MOU WITH PNG ACCREDITATION BODY

NATA and the Papua New Guinea Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (PONGLAS) have revised their 2002 MOU.

The Assistant Director of the Papua New Guinea Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (PONGLAS), Johnny K Moses and NATA Chief Executive, Alan Patterson signed a revised memorandum of understanding (MOU) on 28 August 2009.

The MOU is a revised and updated version of the original signed in 2002. Most of the changes involve specific agreements with certain accreditation fields within NATA.

It was the culmination of a week Mr Moses and his colleague, Auldrin Bill spent in Sydney undergoing training with Proficiency Testing Australia, NATA's wholly owned subsidiary. Last year, Mr Moses undertook similar training with NATA.

Mr Moses said that the MOU relates to PONGLAS's interest in NATA building up the organisation's capacity and credibility.

"The relationship is like a father and a

son," he laughed. "It goes back to the early 1980s. NATA was doing all the assessments for PONGLAS at that stage, until 2002 when I received training from NATA assessors and we started doing assessments ourselves. We still use technical assessors from NATA when necessary and we'll continue to subcontract NATA staff.

"The benefit of the revised MOU is the capacity and credibility it will help build in some areas where we don't have the expertise. We have expertise for construction materials testing (CMT) and chemical testing but we don't have experience in biological and medical testing and a number of other fields."

According to Mr Moses, 25–30 per cent of PNG's laboratories are accredited.

"PONGLAS has 15 accredited laboratories – 11 under CMT and four under Chemical Testing. We used to have more chemical testing facilities but they wound up their operations. Accredita-

tion is not mandatory in PNG. They usually get accredited because the law requires it in some instances. Most of the construction projects in PNG are funded by organisations like AusAID who require their labs to be accredited."

He added that PONGLAS is expanding with the establishment of new oil, gas and mining projects. The European Union also insists that laboratories that test fish exported to Europe are accredited.

PONGLAS is part of PNG's National Institute of Standards and Industrial Technology whose certification division has an MOU with another NATA subsidiary, NCS International.

"PONGLAS is clearly going from strength to strength," said NATA Chief Executive, Alan Patterson. "I'm proud that NATA has been able to play a role in that. In signing this MOU, I look forward to this longstanding relationship continuing."

APLAC/PTB PROFICIENCY TESTING WORKSHOPS

Bangkok saw the final APLAC/PTB PT workshop in August 2009. This concluded a very successful series of three begun in 2007 that took participants through a training program that involved the basic processes of PT from needs analysis, planning and organising PT programs, data collection and statistical analysis.

The objective of the series of workshops was to bring participants to a level at which they would be able design and organise relatively simple PT programs within their own economies, thereby acquiring actual experience and to further develop expertise sufficient to meet the reasonable needs of laboratories in those economies and those of the national accreditation bodies and to satisfy the ILAC/APLAC MRA requirements.

Participants were drawn from a number of APLAC member bodies and also from some from neighbouring economies such as Bhutan, Maldives, Lao and Cambodia. APLAC members were Australia, Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, India, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Korea, Mexico, USA and Viet Nam. Workshops were held in Kuala Lumpur, Hanoi and Bangkok and consisted of a balance of theory and practical exercises coupled with group discussion sessions. Each workshop included homework for presentation at the next session culminating in the organisation, by groups, of five PT programs. At the Bangkok workshop, the APLAC PT Convenor, Dan Tholen, delved somewhat deeper into statistical treatment of PT data and also pro-



vided a detailed look at the forthcoming ISO/IEC 17043, giving valuable insights into the thinking of the WG during the preparation of the standard.

The participants included individuals with substantial experience in providing PT programs for laboratories in their respective economies to those with no experience in the subject. This blend of expertise enhanced the workshops with great interaction between presenters and participants.

The final homework exercises were for groups of participants to develop worthwhile PT programs to illustrate some of the variety required to satisfy the needs of laboratory accreditation bodies and their constituent laboratories. The programs were for pH in water, chemical tests on cement, cytology, ultrasonic flaw detection and calibration of laboratory masses. The cytology program was novel in that it used web based virtual samples, illustrating the possibilities for PT in many other areas of testing where sample distribution is difficult or time consuming.

The programs for ultrasonic detection of flaws in a steel plate and for the calibration of masses were

incomplete. As exercises they did, however, provide participants with the opportunity to design programs and experience some of the pitfalls associated with the implementation of programs involving manufacture of artificial artefacts (ultrasonics) and in the organisation of those involving sequential distribution of artefacts to a number of laboratories in a number of countries (ultrasonics and mass).

These programs demonstrated that many of the participants are very sophisticated in the operation of PT programs and the associated statistics. They also illustrated that all participants benefited substantially from participation. The series was coherent and progressive so that there was benefit in continuity of participation – an opportunity not available to all participants.

It is clear that in some small economies in the region, the provision of PT at the level necessary to satisfy the demands of the ILAC/APLAC MRAs will be difficult to manage from domestic resources and even more difficult to provide from external and commercial sources due to the costs and administrative barriers within some countries.

Continued on page 7

For these reasons, it is inevitable, in the short term at least, that the national accreditation body will need to be very active in acting as the PT service provider, probably in collaboration with relevant national scientific institutions.

In the longer term, a market may be developed in those economies such that the service can be provided on a commercial basis but, initially, there is an important role for the accreditation body to play. Some form of ongoing support from collaborations such as APLAC/PTB would therefore be of significant benefit to these countries.

Participants at this series of workshops have established valuable networks among the group, which would normally not be available to people working in this specialised field.

Similar networks among other accreditation practitioners in the APLAC region would also be useful for their professional development.

APLAC meetings are generally the preserve of senior officers whereas this type of technical interaction provides opportunities for the more specialist staff.

While it is inevitable that there will be some variation in national participation in programs such as this, attention should be paid to encouraging participants to commit to the full program. Continuity of participation would enhance its overall outcome.

While there may be other individuals with a professional interest in PT working in the Asia Pacific region, it is unlikely that there would be a sufficient number to justify a simple repetition of the series of workshops and opportunities should now be sought for worthwhile projects, at about this level, in other technical activities of interest to accreditation bodies. Future activities of this kind could include training trainers for technical assessors, reference material production, validation and certification and deepening

knowledge of accreditation bodies in areas such as uncertainty of measurement, method validation and chemical metrology.

This series of workshops involved participants from non-APLAC members. This is to be commended as it should be considered as an outreach to the less developed countries that are, nevertheless, within the region of influence for APLAC and may offer them the encouragement to seek membership of APLAC in future. APLAC is the obvious Regional Cooperation Body to cater for the needs of all countries in the general Asia and South-east Asia area.

APLAC also has great opportunities for further collaboration with organisations such as PTB and APMP which can strengthen its technical programs in support of its members.

John Gilmour

NEWS FROM TAIWAN ACCREDITATION FOUNDATION

Familiarizing Proficiency Testing Providers with ISO/IEC 17043

On 1 December 2009, TAF invited Mr Dan Tholen, the Chair of ISO CASCO WG28 and reputed expert of proficiency testing, to give a talk in the "Seminar on Proficiency Testing – A Worldwide Tool for Laboratories and Accreditation Bodies". Dr Jay-San Chen, TAF President, welcomed Dan and gave the opening speech. There were 347 representatives from various laboratories, PT providers, academic institutes and regulators participating in the seminar. Quite a few questions raised by the participants were about the responsibilities of the participating laborato-

ries and the connection between the accreditation bodies and the PT providers. Ms Sylvia Lin, Director of the TAF Laboratory Accreditation Department, also introduced the TAF policies and requirements of PT activities. Following the seminar, Dan also lectured a 2-day training course on ISO/IEC 17043 on 2-3 December 2009 for 46 participants. Some intensive discussions lay in the selection of proper statistics methods and their characteristics. Most participants found the training course very informative and useful. TAF will keep promoting



the accreditation and related tools, such as proficiency testing, and familiarizing interested parties with new international criteria.