

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

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APLAC also maintains a web site at:  
[www.aplac.org](http://www.aplac.org)

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This issue is published by



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# APLAC

## Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation

### From the Secretariat

Registrations for the APLAC MRA Council meeting along with the ISO/IEC 17011 training course, to be held in Seoul, Korea, in May 2010, are now open. Please send your completed registration forms to the Secretariat by April 9 for the MRA Council meeting and April 6 for the training course. Hotel booking forms should be sent to KOLAS.

Planning is progressing well for the ISO 17043 and RMP workshops to be held later in the year.

Michael Fraser is well into his training as the future APLAC Secretary. He will be spending a week with Helen and Janet commencing 22 March, learning about agenda paper preparation and other APLAC mysteries(!)

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

- APLAC Quality Manual, issue no. 7
- MR 003, issue no. 16
- MR 010, issue no. 1
- PR 007, issue no. 28
- PR 008, issue nos. 42, 43
- SEC 017, issue no. 13
- SEC 038, issue nos. 44, 45
- SEC 039, issue nos. 27, 28
- TC 008, issue no. 2
- Four reports on completed APLAC PT programs (in the "members only" area)
- Minutes of the December 2009 meetings of the Public Information and Technical Committees (in the "members only" area)

Members are encouraged to send suggestions for improving APLAC's processes, procedures, etc. to the Secretariat.

### Next Issue

The Taiwan Accreditation Foundation will be publishing APLAC News Notes, edition 103 in June 2010.

### In This Issue

- From the Secretariat
- International Accreditation Service Update
- World Accreditation Day
- IAS Attends the Measurement Science Conference
- ISO/IEC 17025 Standard Training Offered
- Quality Pyramid – Prime Mover Towards Organizational Effectiveness
- New Zealand is the place to be this year for the 17th PAC Plenary
- Inter American Accreditation Cooperation Report
- New Singapore GLP Compliance Programme for Registration of Novel Chemicals
- Singapore as Part of the OECD MAD Framework
- News from TAF

# International Accreditation Service (IAS)



## Update

Economic recession has continued to have a global impact on virtually every industry, including governmental bodies. Despite the effects of the recession within the United States and in many other parts of the globe, the International Accreditation Service (IAS) has been able to steadily increase its business in most of the accreditation programs we offer.

The largest segment of IAS services – laboratory accreditation – continues to expand, and several new laboratories were accredited in 2009. In support of the International Code Council, IAS's parent company, the IAS laboratory accreditation program serves a broad spectrum of laboratories involved in building and consumer product testing, and has expanded to include accreditations in the chemical, petroleum, electrical and sustainable product fields.

Staff monitoring and careful coordination of its highly trained and qualified contract assessors is a key factor in maintaining IAS's reputation for providing high-quality assessments. By skillfully combining in-house expertise with outside resources, IAS has managed to reduce its overall expenses and has passed on some of the savings to its clients – a gesture



*IAS Technical Assessors B.N. Taranath (standing to the left) and Dr. Craig Joss (writing) conducting an assessment of a testing laboratory.*

much appreciated in these challenging economic times. The quality and efficiency of our service is reflected in a 98% retention rate of clients. These efforts by staff have enabled us to provide field assessment services to many of our new clients without the need to hire, train and qualify additional outside consultants, which also keeps expenses in check. IAS assessors or teams of assessors are constantly performing accreditation tasks in often remote locations in the United States (including Guam and Alaska), where they conduct assessments, provide training, attend meetings or represent IAS in an official capacity.

The first two quarters of 2009 posed a strenuous travel schedule for the globe-trotting IAS staff and its assessor teams as IAS services its clients' needs far and wide in the United States including several international engagements. In early January, assessment teams traveled internationally to conduct code-related assessments of the inspection programs of structural steel fabricators. The pace quickened in the second quarter of 2009 with code-related training activities and meetings that involved IAS staff and management in Egypt, Taiwan, Hong Kong, the Caribbean and again back to Mexico.

## IAS continued

The second quarter assessment activities included entities that have sought IAS accreditation because of our international reputation and our close relationship with regulators in the construction sector. When approached by a laboratory or inspection body seeking IAS accreditation overseas, IAS is sensitive to the existing national accreditation programs of our mutual recognition partners. In countries where the national accreditation body is a signatory to the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA), IAS has adopted the ILAC Cross Frontier Policy. This policy requires that prior to accepting applications for accreditation outside of the U.S., IAS inquires whether the applicant is aware of the local accreditation body, advises that the accreditation could be more economically performed by a local body and points out the equivalence of the local accreditation demonstrated through the ILAC MRA. Although applicants are aware of these key points, in some cases they continue to seek IAS accreditation in addition to accreditation by the designated local accreditation body.

In early June, IAS management traveled to Hong Kong to attend the Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC) mid-year meetings and to participate in a two-day refresher training course designed for experienced peer evaluators on ISO/IEC Standard 17011, "General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies." Later that month, IAS Vice President Pat McCullen traveled to Mexico City to join an APLAC team for a one-week peer evaluation of the Mexican Accreditation Entity (ema) with team members from IANZ (New Zealand), NIST/NVLAP (U.S.) and CONACYT (Paraguay).

In mid-June, Chuck Ramani, IAS President, traveled to Taiwan to participate in the Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (PAC) 16th Plenary Meeting. PAC is the international cooperation of accreditation bodies involved with the accreditation of product certification agencies. In the same way that IAS participates in APLAC and ILAC peer evaluations, training, proficiency testing and other activities for testing laboratories, calibration laboratories and inspection bodies,

participating in PAC activities and fulfilling obligations as an MLA partner is vitally important to IAS's accreditation program for product certification agencies. IAS continued its travels into the second half of 2009 with several assessments and other engagements in the Middle East and China.

The IAS Building Department Accreditation program for regulatory agencies continues to grow, although on a slower pace, as several potential applicants have been forced by economic circumstances to curtail operations. On a brighter note, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has now agreed to give Community Rating System (CRS) credits for IAS-accredited building departments. There are also discussions



*Chuck Ramani, IAS President, and Eva Nilsen, PAC Executive Committee Chair, after the signing ceremony at the PAC Plenary Meeting.*

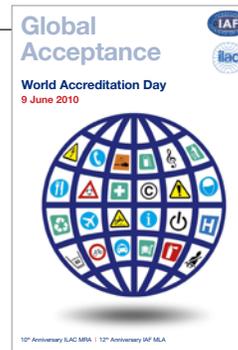
with the U.S. Department of Energy and Homeland Security that may further broaden federal recognition of this program. These efforts will increase the value of the IAS program among governmental agencies in the U.S. Internationally, code administration agencies in three other countries have relayed interest in adapting this program. IAS has already been retained by these entities to assist them in developing a national accreditation program for building departments in their respective countries.

As we close out the first quarter of 2010, IAS continues to see an upward trend in accreditation activities and is optimistic about the progress being made toward economic recovery. Participation in the APLAC family remains a key benefit for IAS and all signatories to provide greater value to our customers. IAS is proud to be a member of the APLAC family sharing a common vision as together we seek to enhance the quality and safety of life and community throughout the world.

**World Accreditation Day**

Make plans to promote World Accreditation Day, June 9, 2010. The theme for the day is 'Global Acceptance.' A World Accreditation Day poster will be available for download at [www.ilac.org](http://www.ilac.org).

In celebration of World Accreditation Day, all U.S.-based ILAC recognized accreditation bodies will convene in Washington, D.C. to celebrate the event.



**IAS Attends the Measurement Science Conference**

IAS attended the 2010 Measurement Science Conference (MSC), March 22–26, in Pasadena, California, and also had an exhibit booth at the MSC Expo.

**ISO/IEC Standard 17025 Training Offered May 24–26**

IAS will offer a training program on ISO/IEC Standard 17025:2005, May 24–26, in Washington, DC. The training, which provides a complete overview of the ISO/IEC Standard 17025:2005 requirements, is being offered to individuals who work for testing and calibration laboratories, and product certification organizations. For more information or to register, [www.iasonline.org/More/training-Std17025.html](http://www.iasonline.org/More/training-Std17025.html).



**Quality Pyramid – Prime Mover Towards Organizational Effectiveness**

Quality Management is one of the prime movers that drive a company towards maintaining high ethical standards and to have a disciplined way of working to resolve issues.

The baseline that is responsible for the foundation of the quality system are the Mission Statement and Vision Statement. There has been ambiguity about the mission and vision statement. A mission statement states the goals and purpose of the organization currently. A vision statement addresses the futuristic goals that the organization is pursuing and the services that it wishes to offer. Both statements guide the quality of an organization and must be aligned with the strategic and business goals.

The mission and vision statements are the ground rules under which an organization operates. Based on the current and futuristic goals outlined by the mission and vision statements, brainstorming of potential quality policies and objectives is done. It is important to funnel down the significant quality policies and objectives and avoid minutiae.

Based on the quality policies and objectives, two arms of quality management come into existence. The two arms are the Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Control (QC) systems. Quality Assurance refers to the planned system of reviewing and monitoring the quality of the organization. This involves reviews and verification done by independent third parties. Quality control refers to the activities used to verify compliance with the technical and administrative requirements of the protocol under which the operations are performed. There are several quality control tools used to analyze and interpret data graphically and statistically.

Then, the supplementary quality documentation, popularly known as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are documented.

Establishing this portion of the Quality Management System (QMS) is a key ingredient for an organization's integrity and operations. However, there is another piece that is important to complete this pyramid: Right People for the Right Job. Organizations need to have personnel with the right attitude and competence to drive the operations and ensure that organizational effectiveness is sustained. The personnel need to be trained properly and adequately to perform the job. The training should be documented, and future training goals for the staff should be updated by the management on a periodic basis.

Now, the pyramid is complete. To make this pyramid effective and vibrant, the management and the personnel are required to perform the following operations: (a) internal audits (b) management reviews (c) generating corrective actions (d) capturing preventive actions and (e) employee recognition and motivation.

Internal audits need to be performed annually (minimum) by an organization to verify compliance with its quality policies, procedures, internal and external requirements (standards/criteria). The operations of the organization must also be reviewed to determine their effectiveness. The review should be performed by independent, third party personnel.

Management reviews are performed after the internal audit. The issues noted during the internal audit and other actions pertinent to the organizational goals are discussed during the management review meeting.

Corrective actions are taken after a non-conformance is identified. Implementation and follow-up of corrective actions is mandatory for effective quality assurance. Preventive actions are taken before a non-conformance is identified. This can avoid penalties in the future and unnecessary expenses. Preventive actions are a "stitch in time," and as all know, "a stitch in time saves nine."

Finally, employees need to be motivated by the management. The employees must be rewarded for outstanding work, and appropriate recognition must be provided. This re-energizes the employees and builds trustworthiness of employees into the organization.

In summary, constructing a quality pyramid is quite a work. More importantly, ensuring the stability and efficiency of the quality pyramid can be accomplished only by periodic monitoring of the systems and measuring the organizational performance.

## **New Zealand is the place to be this year for the 17th PAC Plenary!**



PAC cordially invites all APLAC members to the 17th PAC Plenary in Wellington, New Zealand's capital, from 12-19 June inclusive.

For the third time since 1995, the annual PAC Plenary and associated meetings will be hosted by one of PAC's long-standing members: JAS-ANZ. A signatory to the PAC and IAF MLAs for QMS, EMS and Product, JAS-ANZ is a well-established Accreditation Body operating in Australia and New Zealand. JAS-ANZ is also a Full Member of APLAC and a signatory to the APLAC MRA for Inspection. PAC is very fortunate to have JAS-ANZ as its host once again in 2010!

Meetings will be held in the scenic city of Wellington. Delegates will benefit from a full program of meetings, seminars and training workshops, and opportunities to network with colleagues from the Asia Pacific Region.

Highlights will include a 2-day workshop for Trainee Peer Evaluators, an industry-focused seminar by JAS-ANZ on how accreditation supports the supply chain, and a Gala Dinner where members' achievements will be featured.

The annual Plenary meeting will focus on activities and initiatives realized by PAC during the past year including progress made towards the 2009-2011 PAC Strategic Plan. Several PAC Office Bearers will also be elected, and liaison reports from other regional groups such as APLAC will be presented.

Meetings will provide members and stakeholders opportunities to discuss current technical issues, future training needs for the region, next steps associated with the expansion of the PAC MLA Programs, and best practices and new ways to promote the recognition and acceptance of the results of MLA signatories as a means to facilitate trade.

Interested to register or looking for more information on the event? Visit the PAC website ([www.apec-pac.org](http://www.apec-pac.org)) or contact the PAC Secretary ([pacsecr@email.com](mailto:pacsecr@email.com)).

See you in New Zealand!

# Inter American Accreditation Cooperation



This report includes IAAC activities from September 2009 to February 2010.

## **IAAC MLA scope extension**

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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**

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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 - Cgre/INMETRO  
Canada - SCC  
Mexico - ema  
USA - ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board, doing business as ANAB

## IAAC continued

### 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**

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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.

### **Training**

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IAAC has an extensive training program. The following is a list of training activities held in 2009 and planned for 2010:

- Workshop on ISO/IEC 17021 Part 2 to be held in the United States, between October and November 2010.
- Peer evaluator training workshop for experienced evaluators to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on August 20, 2010.
- Workshop on Accreditation Good Practices to be held in Asuncion, Paraguay, in June 2010.
- Workshop on ISO/IEC 17024 to be held in Guatemala City, Guatemala, on March 9–10, 2010.
- Workshop on clinical/medical laboratories accreditation based on ISO 15189 in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, was held on November 11–13, 2009.
- Workshop on Food Certification was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on September 28–30, 2009.
- Peer evaluator training workshop was held in San Jose, Costa Rica, on September 4, 2009.
- Seminar “Market surveillance through accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies” was held in San Jose, Costa Rica, on September 3, 2009.

### **IAAC Proficiency Testing programs**

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#### **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 samples have been distributed. This program includes laboratories from the IAAC and APLAC regions.

**IAAC T003 Proficiency Test for Fatty Acids.** An IAAC regional proficiency testing programme on Fatty Acids composition in Vegetable

Oil is being carried out by OAA/INTI of Argentina. This program began in November 2008 and concluded in November 2009. The final report is available at the IAAC website [www.iaac.org.mx](http://www.iaac.org.mx). Laboratories from the IAAC region participated as well as laboratories of 8 APLAC members and 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.

### **Cooperation with International and Regional Organizations**

#### **IAAC meetings**

- The IAAC 33rd Executive Committee, MLA Committee and Laboratories Subcommittee meetings will be held in Montevideo, Uruguay, on March 22–24, 2010.
- The 15TH General Assembly meetings will held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from August 20–27, 2009.

#### **IAAC Information and Publications**

Information on members and IAAC documents is available at the IAAC website: [www.iaac.org.mx](http://www.iaac.org.mx).

## **New Singapore GLP Compliance Program for Registration of Novel Chemicals**

Pre-clinical trials conducted by Good Laboratory Practice (GLP)-compliant testing facilities in Singapore will now be accepted by some 30 OECD and non-OECD countries, including the US, EU, Australia and Japan. This comes after Singapore achieved the new Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Mutual Acceptance of Data (OECD MAD) adherent status.

In January 2010, 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 in Singapore.

### **Singapore as Part of the OECD MAD Framework**

Scientific and technical advances have led to development of new chemicals for medicines, agrochemicals and consumer products. Regulatory authorities need to ensure that such products are safe for human usage and consumption by analyzing accurate and reliable test data.

For instance, in developing a medical product, non-clinical safety studies such as toxicological investigations are conducted before clinical trials on human beings. These safety studies are important to estimate a safe dosage and identify potential side effects.

While necessary, accurate and reliable test data required by the regulatory authorities can result in time consuming and expensive re-testing. To overcome this challenge, Singapore successfully got its Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) Compliance Program on board the OECD MAD framework. It allows data from OECD member and specific non-member countries to be accepted and recognized among each other, for assessment purposes and other uses relating to the protection of human health and the environment.

With Singapore being part of the OECD MAD framework, test data from Singapore's GLP compliant testing facilities are recognised by the regulatory authorities of OECD member and specific non-member countries.

In Singapore, SPRING Singapore is the GLP Monitoring Authority. It manages the GLP Compliance Program to ensure registered facilities performing non-clinical safety testing in Singapore comply with the OECD Principles of Good Laboratory Practice. The Secretariat of Singapore Accreditation Council (SAC) currently has responsibilities for both the accreditation and GLP programs. For more information on the GLP program, please visit [www.spring.gov.sg/glp](http://www.spring.gov.sg/glp) or contact Ms. Chin Poh Yin at email [chin\\_poh\\_yin@spring.gov.sg](mailto:chin_poh_yin@spring.gov.sg)

## **News from TAF**

### *Invitation to the Workshop on Worldwide Accreditation / Certification for Telecommunication Equipment*

The APEC TEL 41 will be held May 6–12, 2010, in the Taipei International Convention Center in Chinese Taipei. In addition to the meetings, a celebration will also be organized for the 10th year of APEC TEL MRA. In order to promote the APEC TEL MRAs, particularly the new MRA – ETR (Equivalence of Technical Requirements), the National Communications Commission (NCC), the Telecom Technology Center (TTC) and the TAF will co-host a one-day workshop on Worldwide Accreditation / Certification for Telecommunication Equipment on May 10, 2010. Topics include experience of conformity assessment of telecommunication equipment shared by regulator representatives from USA (Federal Communications Commission, FCC), Canada (Industry Canada, IC), Japan (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, MIC / Japan Voluntary Laboratory Association for Telecommunication Equipment, JVLATE), Singapore (Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore, IDA) and Taiwan (NCC), and the development of the new MRA – ETR, introduced by TAF. APLAC is a SRB to APEC and has been involved in the development of APEC TEL MRA-related issues for years. APLAC members who are interested in TEL issues are cordially invited to participate in the workshop. Formal invitations and registration forms will be sent to all APLAC members shortly. For more information, please contact TAF at [wanjij@taftw.org.tw](mailto:wanjij@taftw.org.tw).