HOW ACCREDITATION, EA AND ITS MEMBERS CONTRIBUTE TO A SAFER WORLD

World Accreditation Day

9 June 2018

(#WAD2018)

9 June is the World Accreditation Day, a global initiative, jointly established by IAF and ILAC to raise awareness on the importance of accreditation in the development of economies and societies.

Ensuring a safe and healthy environment for over 217 million workers and more than 500 million inhabitants in the European Union is a crucial issue. Member State governments across the EU recognize the social and economic benefits of good health and safety in everyday life.

Despite the significant reduction in accidents and better prevention, health and safety issues in the EU still call for continuous improvement as:

- **Every year more than 4000 workers** die due to accidents at work and more than **3 million workers** are victims of a serious accident at work leading to an absence from work of more than three days[5];
- **24.2% of workers consider that their health and safety are at risk** because of their work, and **25% declared that work has a general negative effect on their health**[6];
- **About 460 000 premature deaths** were attributed to fine particulate air pollution in 2011[7];
- **2 201 alerts** circulated in 2017 in the EU Rapid Alert System (platform to exchange information for dangerous non-food products) concerning products posing all kinds of risks[8].

Product safety is a major political issue for public authorities in Europe. To reinforce confidence of consumers that they will find safe goods on the European Market without limiting access to new products, the EU adopted the New Legislative Framework (NLF) in 2008.

The NLF is based on Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 and Decision No 768/2008, which set out the requirements for accreditation and market surveillance requirements as well as conformity assessment. Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 establishes that accreditation shall be the preferred route in the Member States to assess and demonstrate competence and impartiality of Notified Bodies. Notified bodies carry out tests, inspections and controls required to demonstrate that a product intended to be placed on the market complies with all requirements for health, security and environment provided by product legislations.

This legal framework exists to ensure confidence of consumers, public authorities and manufacturers regarding conformity of products in a safer European market.

EA follows up closely alignment of product legislation. To know more about this, please consult our news regularly.

Click here to read the 'Blue Guide' on the implementation of EU products rules 2016

5- *European Statistics on Accidents at Work (ESAW), 2011*
6- *European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), 2010*
7- *Environment and human health, EEA Report No 5/2013, European Environment Agency and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre.*
8- *https://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumers_safety/safety_products/rapex/alerts/repository/content/pages/rapex/infographs/report-2017/*

The benefits provided by accreditation and the EA MLA

The importance of accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) has substantially increased since the late 1980s. Consumers, businesses, regulators and other organizations all over the world want to be able to trust and have confidence in the goods and services they buy and use every day. Consequently, there has been a growth in specified national and international requirements for products, processes and services.

Since its creation EA has been cooperating with the European Commission, EFTA and competent national authorities to promote, develop and implement accreditation as the best option for regulating a wide range of sectors of the economy.

EA develops a multilateral agreement of mutual recognition, the EA Multilateral Agreement (EA MLA), signed between National Accreditation Bodies to recognize equivalence, reliability and therefore acceptance by the European market, of certification, verification, inspection and calibration certificates and test reports issued by accredited CABs.

The EA MLA benefits the European society and all European citizens as accreditation provides confidence in the quality of the air we breathe, the safety of the food we eat, the safety of the environment we work in.

What EA and its Members do to provide a safer world – Examples

Pesticide Residues Analysis

Food and feed test reports generated in one country and reinforced by the accreditation mark of an Accreditation Body (AB) may end up in other countries as part of the information required by operators for their trade within the EU. The international dimension of the economy rests upon equivalence and reliability of conformity assessment services: tested once, accepted everywhere!
By using accredited laboratories, industry may export their products without the need for re-retesting on each new market.

The **technical network (TN) "Food and Feed Testing" of the EA Laboratory Committee (LC)** convened by Ioannis Sitaras (ESYD – Greece) is currently working on the drafting of guidance on «Accreditation of pesticide residues analysis in Food and Feed". The aim of the document is to reach a harmonized approach on using EN ISO /IEC 17025 *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories* (content of test report, review of request, …) to guarantee a more reliable and transparent approach to the pesticide residues analyses performed by laboratories.

Occupational Safety and Health

On 12 March 2018, ISO published ISO 45001 *Occupational health and safety management systems – Requirements*. This standard provides a framework for organizations to improve employee safety, reduce workplace risks and create better, safer working conditions by providing an effective set of processes. Designed to help organizations and industries of all sizes, ISO 45001 is expected to reduce workplace injuries and ill-health around the world by providing guidance for improving worker safety in countries around the world. Accredited certification in this field will also have a business advantage by helping businesses to reduce disruption costs and insurance premiums for instance.

The **EA Certification Committee** plays a key role in supporting a harmonized approach to the use of the standard having an action at EA and IAF levels, by:

- Contributing to develop key guidance (IAF MD22: 2018 *Application of ISO/IEC 17021-1 for the Certification of Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (OH and SMS)*)
- Setting up a train-the-trainer workshop, facilitated by Marco Cerri (ACCREDIA, Italy) and Leonardo Omodeo-Zorini (IIOC, EA Recognized Stakeholder member) in March 2018 meant to highlight and share a common understanding on the new standard, to be further disseminated amongst EA Accreditation Body assessors.

Plant Health

EA collaborates actively with the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) to harmonize official plant protection procedures and regulations across Europe.

In June 2017, 4 members of the **EA Laboratory Committee** attended the EPPO workshop held in the Netherlands during which Ioannis Sitaras, the Convener of the LC TN Food & Feed, presented the concept of flexible scopes and National Accreditation Bodies examples to illustrate how flexible scopes are accredited in EA.

A presentation by Madeleine McMullen (EPPO) was also made during the LC meeting in September 2017 to show the EPPO database on diagnosis expertise. This database provides an inventory of diagnosis expertise, classified by laboratory, expertise on specific pests, by technical auditors or technical experts.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In 2015, EA extended its MLA to the new scope "Greenhouse Gas Validation and Verification" after having signed, in August 2013, a specific agreement with Directorate-General Climate Action of the European Commission for the implementation of accreditation and peer-evaluation of EA-Member National Accreditation Bodies according to EN ISO 14065 and Commission Regulation (EU) N°600/2012.

To date, 24 EA Members are signatories to the EA MLA for the scope GHG Validation and Verification with 145 accreditations valid at the end of 2017[5].

The EU is calling for a global approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Developments are ongoing to cover international shipping, which is expected to become a large and growing source of concern as shipping emissions are predicted to increase between 50% and 250% by 2050, based on future economic and energy developments.

The **EA Certification Committee EU ETS Network Group**, convened by Peter Hissnauer (DAkkS, Germany), provides input to the updates of currents regulations to enhance the position of Accreditation Bodies to be more harmonized and effective in initiating improvements. EA is involved in different projects such as:

• **MRR/AVR revision**: proposals for revised EU ETS Monitoring and Reporting Regulation (MRR: Commission Regulation (EU) No. 601/2012) and EU ETS Accreditation and Verification Regulation (AVR, Commission Regulation (EU) No. 600/2012) are under discussion with EA;

• **MRVA-2020-revision project**: an Option Paper is under discussion with EA (MRVA: Monitoring Reporting Verification and Accreditation).

In August 2018, EA will also organize a training course on Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA), the first global market-based measure scheme developed by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

Indeed, in order to achieve ICAO's global aspirational goal of carbon neutral growth from 2020 and determine the baseline emissions of the scheme, aeroplane operators will be monitoring their emissions from 2019 onwards with the first verification of an emission report taking place in early 2020.

This training co-convened by Peter Hissnauer (DAkkS, Germany) and Georg Naumann (ICAO), will be the occasion for participants to:
• compare EU ETS Accreditation and Verification Regulation with CORSIA Verification Provisions;
• discuss how EA and its Members may support the worldwide CORSIA Accreditation and Verification Framework.

5- Source: EA survey - January 2018

Rail Transportation

Improving rail safety is the essential precondition for sustainable, competitive rail business and safe transportation in Europe. To achieve this, the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) contributes, on technical matters, to the implementation of the European Union legislation aiming at improving the competitive position of the railway sector by:
- enhancing the level of interoperability of rail systems;
- developing a common approach to safety on the European railway system;
- contributing to creating a Single European Railway Area without frontiers guaranteeing a high level of safety.

An EA/ERA project was conducted and successfully completed in 2017 regarding the assessment of Notified Bodies. But EA is cooperating with ERA on three different activities in the railway sector.

- **Directive (EU) 2016/797 on the interoperability of the rail system (IOD) and Regulation (EU) 2016/796 on the European Union Agency for Railways**: EA collaborated with ERA on the drafting of the Technical Document on Requirements for Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) seeking notification. The main objective was to develop a detailed set of requirements, technical requirements in particular, that Notified Bodies need to apply to harmonize the general level of performance under Directive 2008/57/EC and increase trust in the work they do. The assessment scheme developed was divided into two parts: the first containing general references and information on legal requirements for Notified Bodies, the National Accreditation Body assessment teams, accreditation information etc., and the second providing sectorial requirements to apply when accrediting CABs for the purpose of notification under the IOD. The project was successfully completed in 2017 and the Technical Document was published by ERA in autumn 2017.

- **Implementing Regulation (EU) No 402/2013 on the common safety method for risk evaluation and assessment**: Accreditation is the preferred route for demonstrating assessment bodies' competence. Pursuant to Regulation 402/2013 Article 7 assessment of bodies can be performed either by National Accreditation Bodies or by National Recognition Bodies. The vast majority of Member States decided to take the route of accreditation. But for the Member States that opted for the second route, ERA, in compliance with Article 14 of Regulation (EU) No 402/2013, will organize peer evaluations between recognition bodies based on the same principles as those set out in Article 10 of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008. EA supports ERA in this regard and provides documents and input for the ERA procedure to be applied for peer evaluation of recognition bodies.

- **Regulation (EU) 445/2011 on a system of certification of entities in charge of maintenance for freight wagons**: EA supports ERA regarding the implementation of Regulation (EU) 445/2011 Article 10 and related provisions for providing information on accredited bodies.

Accreditation provides a globally-recognized tool to assess and control risks, not only of the internal operation of businesses, but also of products and services that they place on the market. In this way, Regulators, purchasers and employees can have confidence that accreditation contributes actively to deliver a safer world.

EUROPEAN ACCREDITATION

European Commission

EFTA