

INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

IEC SCHEME FOR CERTIFICATION TO STANDARDS FOR SAFETY OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT FOR EXPLOSIVE ATMOSPHERES (IECEX SCHEME)

Ex Management Committee, ExMC

ILAC Operational Document

Introduction

This ILAC Operational Document is submitted to the ExMC for information purposes for discussion under agenda item 9 of the 2000 ExMC Meeting to be held in Braunschweig. Refer ExMC/56/DA, Draft Agenda.

COVER

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Arrangement
(Arrangement):
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ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Text of the Arrangement

PREAMBLE

The International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) denotes the collaboration of Accreditation Bodies that conduct and administer accreditation systems of calibration laboratories and testing laboratories.

This document describes the elements of a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement) for testing and calibration laboratory accreditation as a means by which the signatories to the ILAC Arrangement for testing and calibration can recognise one another's accredited laboratories. This Mutual Recognition Arrangement (hereinafter referred to as the Arrangement) is a major co-operative effort to enhance the objective of free trade throughout the world.

The criteria for the operation of accredited laboratories and for the operation of the Accreditation Bodies are currently specified respectively in ISO/IEC 17025, December 1999 (and future versions thereof) and in ISO/IEC Guide 58 (and future versions thereof), supplemented by ILAC application documents if necessary.

The principal elements for establishing confidence among the participating systems within ILAC are listed below. These elements are designed to ensure conformance with the requirements in order to establish and maintain mutual confidence in the technical competence of ILAC members and their accredited laboratories. The elements are:

1. Exchange of information on the development and operation of ILAC member accreditation schemes;
2. Participation in the work and decision making of the ILAC General Assembly and ILAC Committees where applicable;
3. Participation in international interlaboratory comparisons and proficiency testing programs;
4. Participation in the work of ILAC Expert Groups and Task Forces held to discuss problems related to testing and calibration in various technical fields;
5. Evaluations of applicants and re-evaluations of signatories to this Arrangement are conducted in accordance with the relevant ILAC and regional cooperation documents;

6. Observations of applicant bodies' and signatories' assessments of their laboratories to determine if these laboratories meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025, December 1999 (and future versions thereof);

7. Confidence in the metrology institutes of the signatory economies to which traceability is claimed by accredited laboratories and support for the measurement comparison activities of BIPM* and/or regional metrology organisations.

This Arrangement does not affect other recognition required by laws and regulations in the economies of the signatory bodies.

* *Bureau International des Poids et Mesures*



MUTUAL RECOGNITION ARRANGEMENT (ARRANGEMENT)

1. This Arrangement is based on the results of the evaluations carried out in accordance with the relevant rules and procedures contained in the ILAC Arrangement policy, ILAC P1 and ILAC P2 documents.
2. Each accreditation body signatory to this Arrangement will follow its terms and conditions and the procedures defined in ILAC P1 document and also:
 - ♦ Maintain conformance with ISO/IEC Guide 58 (and future versions thereof) and related ILAC guidance documents,
 - ♦ Ensure that all accredited laboratories comply with ISO/IEC 17025, December 1999 (and future versions thereof) and related ILAC guidance documents.
3. Each recognised Regional Cooperation Body will follow the procedures defined in ILAC P2.
4. Each signatory:
 - (i) recognises the operation of other systems – within the programmes as defined in this arrangement – as equivalent to its own,
 - (ii) recommends and promotes the acceptance of the calibration certificates and test reports from the laboratories accredited by the other signatories as being on an equal basis with those of its own accredited laboratories,
 - (iii) investigates all complaints initiated by a signatory resulting from certificates or reports issued by the laboratories it has accredited within its accreditation programs,
 - (iv) notifies all other signatories as soon as possible of any significant changes that have occurred or will occur in its status, in the operational practices of its system or in its accreditation programs,
 - (v) contributes as appropriate to the work of the Arrangement Council,
 - (vi) participates as appropriate in the meetings of the working group(s) of ILAC,
 - (vii) provides evaluators for the evaluation and re-evaluation of accreditation bodies and Regional Co-operations,
 - (viii) co-operates with other accreditation bodies so that the Arrangement may be extended to include other accreditation bodies and regional bodies,
 - (ix) uses all information in a confidential and professional manner.
5. To participate in the ILAC Arrangement, an accreditation body will be evaluated in accordance with the relevant rules and procedures defined in P1 and will participate by completing a signature sheet authorised by the ILAC Chair (Annex A of this Arrangement).
6. The scope of participation of a signatory may be extended or reduced following re-evaluation in accordance with the relevant rules and procedures.
7. If a signatory wishes to withdraw from this Arrangement, that body shall notify the ILAC Arrangement Management Committee in writing not later than three months in advance of withdrawing. The Arrangement Management Committee will notify other participating bodies. Upon withdrawal of a body, that body's Signature Sheet shall be deleted.
8. In the event of the ILAC Council making an adverse decision or finding, the procedures defined in the ILAC Arrangement Policy statement apply.
9. Any amendment of the text of this Arrangement shall be approved by the ILAC General Assembly.

10. It is recognised and accepted by each of the signatories that this Arrangement does not create any rights, liabilities or obligations that would have binding effect in national or international law. This Arrangement by itself does not provide any recognition or accreditation under any law or regulation in the economy of any signatory body.
11. This Arrangement consists of twelve (12) Clauses plus an Annex listing each signatory, along with the extent of its accreditation programs.
12. This Arrangement will come into effect upon signature of the affected parties.

The scope of participation of a signatory to the ILAC Arrangement is currently limited to:

1. calibration laboratories,
2. testing laboratories

ANNEX A: SIGNATURE SHEET, ILAC MUTUAL RECOGNITION ARRANGEMENT

SIGNATORIES

We, the undersigned, endorse the terms of the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement and undertake, to the best of our ability, fulfilment of its objectives.

Organisation: _____

Economy: _____

Authorised Representative: _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Chairman, ILAC Arrangement Council: Dr Belinda Collins

Signature _____

Date _____