EA MLA REPORT 2017

The EA Multilateral Agreement:
a framework to realise the objective
'Accredited once, accepted everywhere'

CONTENTS

The EA Multilateral Agreement (MLA), signed so far by 34 (out of 36) EA Full Members and half of 14 EA Associate Members, carried on growing and being refined during 2017.

The landmark in this strengthening is certainly twofold. First, EA launched its MLA for Proficiency Testing Providers (PTP) in 2017, when no less than 15 EA-Member national accreditation bodies (NABs) became signatories of the EA MLA for PTP accreditation against EN ISO/IEC 17043. Secondly, EA has been paving the way for expanding the scope of the EA MLA for Reference Materials Producers (RMP), which should be launched in April 2019. Meanwhile, harmonisation of practical issues related to peer evaluations supporting the launch of the EA MLA for RMP accreditation against EN ISO 17034 has been fostered in order for the first peer evaluations to be carried out in 2018.

Such development has been supported by several peer-evaluation activities. Nearly 20 peer evaluations were performed in 2017, when the total number of evaluation reports considered has more than doubled compared to the previous year. Peer-evaluation teams could refresh and sharpen their highly-specialised competences through several training sessions, and thus be enlarged to a total of about 150 evaluators by end of 2017.

Reinforcing the pool of EA peer evaluators proves of the utmost importance to consolidate the peer-evaluation process, which remains under constant improvement. The new IT tool designed to boost the efficiency of peer evaluations' and evaluators' management has been demonstrated in 2017 before being fully started in 2018. Moreover, the EA MLA Council's project on reengineering the peer-evaluation system has been significantly progressed in 2017 with the aim to endorse an implementation plan in autumn 2018.

All these purposeful advances have been enabling EA to increase its recognition in IAF (International Accreditation Forum) and ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation), notably through their successful evaluation in 2017 for the extension of, respectively, EA's MLA/MRA signatory status to accreditation of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Validation & Verification Bodies (EN ISO 14065) and PTP. Furthermore, in parallel with establishing the EA MLA for RMP, EA applied to ILAC for expanding EA's MRA signatory status to RMP.

The major step forward achieved in 2017 is the fruit of strongest commitment of all those involved in the EA MLA system, i.e. members of the EA MLA Council (MAC) and its Management Group, the MAC Secretariat, peer-evaluation teams and trainers. I would like to thank them for their outstanding contribution to maintaining the EA MLA as a sustainable mechanism for ensuring both European and international reliable equivalence and mutual acceptance of certificates and reports issued by accredited conformity assessment bodies. May all of us keep on moving onwards in coming years!

Paulo Tavares (IPAC)
Chair of the EA Multilateral Agreement Council

1 - INTRODUCTION

The EA Multilateral Agreement (EA MLA) report provides information on the signatories to the EA MLA, as well as an overview of the key activities completed in 2017 to further develop the coverage of the EA MLA and to strengthen the operation of the EA peer-evaluation system, including management of EA evaluators.

The main objective of peer-evaluation activities is to evaluate the ongoing compliance of national accreditation bodies (NABs) with the internationally-agreed requirements, as well as to ensure that regulators, stakeholders and the business community can have confidence in the certificates and reports issued by accredited conformity assessment bodies (CABs) under the EA MLA.

According to article 14 of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 '*Setting out the requirements for accreditation and market surveillance relating to the marketing of products and repealing Regulation (EEC) 339/93*', EA has been recognised by the European Commission (EC) to operate the peer-evaluation system of national accreditation bodies. The recognition of EA is confirmed in the G*eneral Guidelines for Cooperation between the European co-operation for Accreditation and the European Commission, the European Free Trade Association and the Competent National Authorities*; these guidelines were initially signed by the parties on 1 April 2009. A new Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) was signed on 24 June 2014 for the period 2014-2017; negotiations for the next period 2018-2021 are expected to be concluded in autumn 2018.

Following article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008, national authorities shall recognise the equivalence of services delivered by national accreditation bodies which have successfully undergone peer evaluation by EA. Furthermore, national authorities shall accept the reports and certificates issued by the conformity assessment bodies accredited by the national accreditation bodies that are EA MLA signatories.

EA and its member accreditation bodies invest significant efforts and resources to maintain the integrity and robustness of the EA MLA through a rigorous peer-evaluation process. The purpose of onsite evaluations is to verify that EA MLA signatories still comply with the internationally-agreed criteria for accreditation bodies and with provisions set out in Regulation (EC) No 765/2008.

Maintaining a sound and reliable evaluation system also requires that EA intensifies its efforts dedicated to training of new evaluator resources. One newcomer training session was organised in June 2017 to support further development of EA's pool of evaluators. Two newcomer sessions have already been planned in 2018.

The EA MLA is an agreement signed between national accreditation bodies – Full and Associate Members of EA which are successfully peer-evaluated – to recognise the equivalence, reliability and therefore acceptance by the European market, of certification, verification, inspection and calibration certificates and test reports issued by accredited conformity assessment bodies.

EA Associate Members are eligible to enter into a Bilateral Agreement with EA signatories of the EA MLA with the aim of establishing mutual confidence in the respective accreditation systems and in their accredited attestations of conformity. EA Associate Members shall comply with the same requirements as Full Members when signing the EA Multilateral Agreement. EA MLA signatories apply the international standards for accreditation of conformity assessment bodies in a harmonised way and the services delivered by those national accreditation bodies are equivalent. Therefore, the marketplace can have confidence in activities of EA MLA signatories and their accredited conformity assessment bodies.

The EA MLA provides the European market with a network of conformity assessment bodies that are competent within their scope of accreditation to issue reliable and credible statements of conformity for products and services, thereby reducing costs and adding value to business and consumers. This contributes to the freedom of trade by eliminating technical barriers.

The EA MLA covers the following activities and standards:

Accreditation of	Scope/Activity (Level 2)	Standards (Level 3)
Laboratories	Testing and Medical Examinations Calibration	EN ISO/IEC 17025 EN ISO 15189 EN ISO/IEC 17025
Certification Bodies	Products certification Certification of persons Management systems certification	EN ISO/IEC 17065 EN ISO/IEC 17024 EN ISO/IEC 17021
Inspection Bodies	Inspection	EN ISO/IEC 17020
Validation and Verification Bodies	GHG Validation and Verification	EN ISO 14065
Proficiency Testing Providers (PTP)	Proficiency Testing Providers	EN ISO/IEC 17043

Scopes of accreditation covered by the EA MLA on 31/12/2017

During 2017, EA Members delivered more than 35 150 accreditations, distributed as follows:

Type of accreditation	2017
Calibration	3 142
Testing	18 804
Medical examinations	3 616
Products certification	1 845
Management systems certification	1 365
Certification of persons	573
Inspection	5 425
Proficiency Testing Providers (PTP)	193
Reference Materials Producers (RMP)	48
GHG Validation and Verification	145
TOTAL	**35 156**

Numbers of accreditations in 2017

4 - SIGNATORIES OF THE EA MLA

Accreditation bodies are accepted under the EA MLA only after stringent evaluation of their operations and activities.

The evaluation is conducted by a peer-evaluation team entrusted with the task to determine accreditation bodies' compliance with the requirements laid down in:

• EN ISO/IEC 17011, the internationally-accepted standard for accreditation bodies;
• Regulation (EC) No 765/2008;
• the relevant standard for conformity assessment bodies including any additional requirements, e.g. those set out by the European Commission in relevant sector-based legislations.

A list of EA MLA signatories (on 31 December 2017) is given in Annexes 1 and 2. For the latest information, please visit the EA website.

1- EA FULL MEMBERS

Out of 36 EA Full Members, 34 have signed the MLA.

The number of Full Member signatories for each scope of the EA Multilateral Agreement remains stable compared to 2016, alongside a substantial number of first signatories for the new scope for Proficiency Testing Providers (PTP) to which the EA MLA was extended in 2017.

Type of accreditation	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Calibration	27	28	32	32	33	32	33	**33**
Testing	28	31	33	33	33	33	34	**34**
Medical examinations*	-	-	-	-	-	31	31	**31**
Inspection	27	29	31	32	33	32	32	**33**
Management systems certification	28	29	29	29	30	29	30	**30**
Products certification	29	29	31	31	31	31	31	**31**
Certification of persons	26	26	26	27	28	27	28	**28**
GHG Validation and Verification	-	-	-	9	25	24	25	**24**
Proficiency Testing Providers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**15**

Numbers of EA Full Member signatories to the EA MLA

* Number of EA Member signatories to the scope of medical examinations has been recorded since 2015 only.

2 - EA ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

ALGERAC and MOLDAC, the Algerian and Moldavian NABs respectively, have become new signatories to the EA MLA in October 2017.
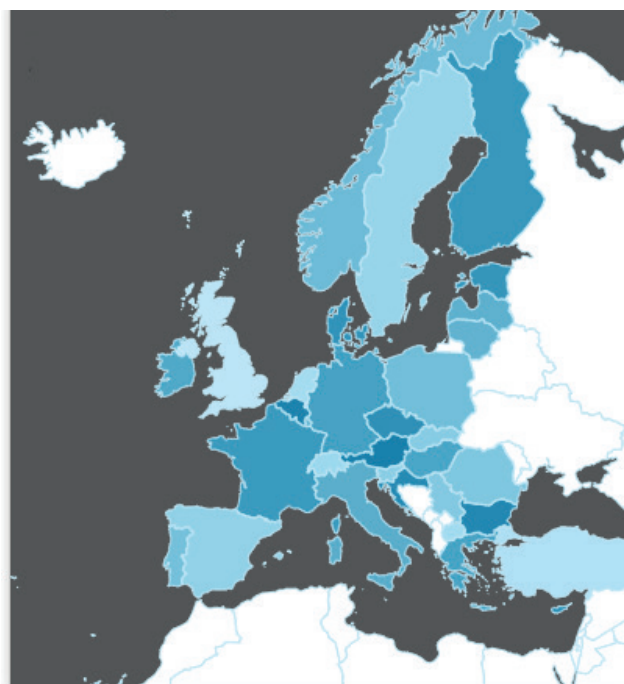
Half of 14 EA Associate Members have signed the EA MLA.

The number of Associate Member signatories for each scope of the EA Multilateral Agreement has roughly doubled compared to previous years.

Type of accreditation	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Calibration	8	2	4	4	4	4	4	7
Testing	8	2	4	4	4	4	4	7
Medical examinations*	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Inspection	4	2	2	2	4	4	4	7
Management systems certification	3	1	2	1	2	2	2	3
Products certification	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
Certification of persons	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2

Numbers of EA Associate Member signatories to the EA MLA through a bilateral agreement

* Number of EA Member signatories to the scope of medical examinations has been recorded since 2015 only.

Map of EA Member signatories to the EA MLA

5 - DECISIONS MADE BY THE EA MLA COUNCIL

The EA MLA Council (MAC) is responsible for the effective and impartial management and monitoring of the peer-evaluation process. It is the decision-making body for acceptance of national accreditation bodies' entering into the EA Multilateral Agreement (MLA) and Bilateral Agreements (BLAs).

The MAC is composed of one representative from each EA Full Member and Associate Member, one observer from the EA Advisory Board and one observer from the European Commission. Since 2015, all EA MLA/BLA signatories have a voting right within the EA MAC.

In 2017, the EA MAC held two meetings on 26-27 April in Sofia, Bulgaria and 4-5 October in Bucharest, Romania, where the below-mentioned decisions were made.

In April 2017, NAH, the Hungarian NAB, became a MLA signatory in the field of inspection, while GAC, the NAB of Georgia, became a BLA signatory in the fields of testing (excluding medical examinations according to EN ISO 15189), calibration, inspection, persons and products certification.

In accordance with EA Resolution 2016 (37) 30 adopted in May 2016*, EA launched its MLA for Proficiency Testing Providers (EN ISO/IEC 17043) in April 2017 when, upon decision by the EA MLA Council, ACCREDIA, CAI, COFRAC, DANAK, ENAC, ESYD, FINAS, NA, PCA, RvA, TURKAK and UKAS became the first 12 signatories of the EA MLA for PTP accreditation. BELAC, RENAR and SWEDAC joined the signatories for PTP scope in October 2017.

Upon decisions made by the EA MLA Council in October 2017, LA, the Lithuanian NAB, while remaining an EA MLA signatory for testing, became a signatory to the EA MLA in the field of medical examinations according to EN ISO 15189. Regarding EA Associate Members, ALGERAC, the Algerian NAB, became a BLA signatory in the fields of testing (excluding medical examinations according to ISO 15189), calibration and inspection, while MOLDAC, the Moldavian NAB, became a BLA signatory in the fields of testing (including medical examinations), calibration, inspection, product certification and management systems certification.

*EA Resolution 2016 (37) 30: The General Assembly, acting upon the recommendation from the Multilateral Agreement Council, approves the launching of the EA MLA for PTP (EN ISO/ IEC 17043) during the Council meeting in April 2017, provided that at least three members are successfully peer-evaluated by that date and have a positive decision by the EA MAC.

6 - EA PEER-EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

The EA MAC decisions on the new or maintained acceptance of a national accreditation body into the EA Multilateral Agreement are based on a stringent peer evaluation of the operation and accreditation activities of this NAB, performed in accordance with EA-2/02 M:2016 - EA Procedure for the Evaluation of a National Accreditation Body.

A total of 18 peer evaluations were performed during 2017, consisting of:

- **2** evaluations for extension of MLA signatory status to PTP: BELAC (Belgium), DAkkS (Germany)
- **3** initial evaluations for BLA signatory status: ALGERAC (Algeria), MOLDAC (Republic of Moldova), BSCA (Belarus)
- **1** re-evaluation with extension of MLA signatory status to PTP: RENAR (Romania)
- **1** re-evaluation with extension of MLA signatory status to products certification: CYS-CYSAB (Cyprus)
- **1** re-evaluation with extension of MLA signatory status to medical examinations: LA (Lithuania)
- **1** re-evaluation with extensions of MLA signatory status to inspection, certification of persons and management systems certification: DPA (Albania)
- **1** re-evaluation with extension of MLA signatory status to management systems certification: IARM (The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
- **6** re-evaluations: AA (Austria), EAK (Estonia), BATA (Bosnia & Herzegovina), ATS (Serbia), BAS (Bulgaria), LATAK (Latvia)
- **2** extraordinary evaluations: NAH (Hungary), HAA (Republic of Croatia)

Furthermore, the second part of 2 re-evaluations was carried out in 2017:
- IPAC (Portugal)
- TURKAK (Turkey) with extension of MLA signatory status to PTP

In total, 21 evaluation reports were reviewed during the April and October MAC meetings, consisting of:
- **5** for initial evaluations for extension of MLA signatory status to PTP
- **3** for initial evaluations
- **9** for re-evaluations as well as initial evaluation for extension of MLA signatory status to PTP
- **1** for re-evaluation as well as initial evaluation for extension of MLA signatory status to medical examinations
- **1** for re-evaluation
- **2** for extraordinary evaluations

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total numbers of evaluations performed [1]	13	19	12	11	13	10	19	**18**
Total numbers of reports discussed [2]	14	14	12	34	27	10	9	**21**
Total man-days for evaluation	455	750	754	673	807	583	1138	**1 080**
Extraordinary evaluations on site	3	3	3	0	2	0	1	**2**
Suspension	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	**0**

Results of EA peer-evaluation activities

[1] *Initial evaluations, re-evaluations with or without scope extensions and extraordinary evaluations (performed on site in the specific year)*

[2] *Reports of evaluations, but not necessarily conducted in the specific year*

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**In 2017, the evaluation teams reported a total of
116 non-conformities, 185 concerns and 131 comments.**

7 - EA PEER-EVALUATION PROCESS

The reliability of the EA MLA is maintained through a robust peer-evaluation process, whose main objectives are to evaluate the ongoing compliance of EA NABs to the internationally-agreed requirements, and to ensure that regulators, stakeholders and the business community can have confidence in those certificates and reports issued by conformity assessment bodies accredited by EA Members having signed the EA MLA.

1 - PEER-EVALUATION PROCESS

The national accreditation body applies for MLA signatory status (initial application or extension of scopes), specifying and justifying the scope (testing, calibration, etc.) for which it applies.

The MLA Council (MAC) Secretariat reviews the application documents and appoints a peer-evaluation team composed of a Team Leader, a Deputy Team Leader and Team Members.

This peer-evaluation team performs the document review (quality management system documents, NAB's procedures, etc.). Where applicable, a pre-evaluation is conducted. Then, the team carries out the onsite evaluation, which combines evaluation of the management system at the NAB's office and observation of assessments carried out by the NAB. At the end of the evaluation, the team drafts the evaluation report. Findings are agreed upon with the NAB at a closing meeting.

A task force group appointed by the MAC Management Group makes a careful study of the evaluation report in order to provide the MAC with a recommendation on the result of the peer evaluation. At its following meeting, the MAC makes a final decision, which is reflected in relevant EA publications and on the EA website.

The European Commission attends MAC meetings, and NABs are encouraged to invite national authorities to observe EA peer evaluations.

2 - RUNNING OF THE EA MAC

In 2017, the EA MAC was chaired by Paulo Tavares from IPAC (Portugal) and vice-chaired by Daniela Ionescu from RENAR (Romania). Paulo Tavares was reelected at the EA General Assembly in May 2017 for a second mandate as MAC Chair during 2018-2019.

From left to right: Daniela Ionescu, (RENAR), Paulo Tavares (IPAC) and Lydie Mauger (EA Secretariat)

EA MAC Management Group (MG)

In 2017, the MAC MG held two face-to-face meetings the day before MAC meetings, i.e. on 25 April in Sofia, Bulgaria and 3 October in Bucharest, Romania. In addition, the MAC MG had 6 web meetings in 2017.

On 27 April 2017, Rolf Straub from SAS (Switzerland) was elected as a new MAC MG Member at the MAC meeting held in Sofia, Bulgaria. On 5 October 2017, An Van den Bergh from BELAC (Belgium), Andreas Hönnerscheid from DAkkS (Germany) and Boštjan Godec from SA (Slovenia) were elected as new MAC MG members at the MAC meeting held in Bucharest, Romania in order to replace Karine Vincent from COFRAC (France), Maria Papatzikou from ESYD (Greece) and Lucyna Olborska from PCA (Poland).

Moreover, in April 2017, the MAC endorsed a new version of the MAC MG Terms of Reference. This revision introduced several improvements, setting especially the duration of the MAC MG Members' mandate.

EA MAC Secretariat

As the EA MAC Secretary since 2016, Lydie Mauger has been managing the EA MAC Secretariat in 2017.

Since January 2017, Sandy Adonel has been responsible for the selection, training and monitoring of EA evaluators in application of EA-2/02-S1: 2016 - *Selection, Training and Monitoring of Evaluators*.

3 - MANAGEMENT OF TRANSITIONS OF STANDARDS

EA's process for the management of transitions of standards and ILAC/IAF documents, which had been established and documented in 2016, was finalized in 2017 with the completion of a full set of rules.

Implementation and monitoring of EN ISO/IEC 17011 transition

The revised internationally-accepted standard for accreditation bodies EN ISO/IEC 17011:2017 has been published in November 2017.
The peer evaluations to be done as from 1 July 2018 will be performed according to the new standard.

4 - POLICY FOR INTER-LABORATORY COMPARISONS (ILCs)

Recognizing the value of the work undertaken by the EA Laboratory Committee (LC) WG ILCs in calibration and testing, the EA Executive Committee resolved, based on the position stated by the EA MAC, that the results of international highlighted ILCs would not be used any longer during the peer-evaluation process because they are not considered to be an appropriate tool to appraise the proper functioning of the MLA. As a consequence, EA-2/14: *Procedure for Regional Calibration ILCs in Support of the EA MLA* and EA-INF/12: *Benefits and Importance of the Participation in EA Highlighted PT Schemes* have been withdrawn in May 2017 by the EA General Assembly upon recommendation from the EA LC. Besides, EA-1/06: *EA MLA – Criteria for Signing – Policy and Procedures for Development* was revised accordingly.

5 - PEER EVALUATIONS WITH POTENTIAL SECURITY RISKS FOR EVALUATORS

A task force group within the EA MAC was established in 2017 to make proposals upon which the legal aspects related to EA's responsibilities towards evaluators' security and safety when they are assigned for peer evaluations in higher-risk third countries could be analysed.

The recommendations by the EA legal adviser, as well as a draft EA Policy on Security Concerns Relating to Conduct of Peer Evaluations, are being considered by the EA Executive Committee together with the EA MAC.

8 - EA PEER EVALUATORS

EA peer evaluators are highly qualified and experienced accreditation body staff members who attend training programs on frequent and regular basis. Peer evaluators' performance is regularly reviewed by the EA MAC Management Group. They can be mandated for peer evaluation at the ILAC or IAF levels.
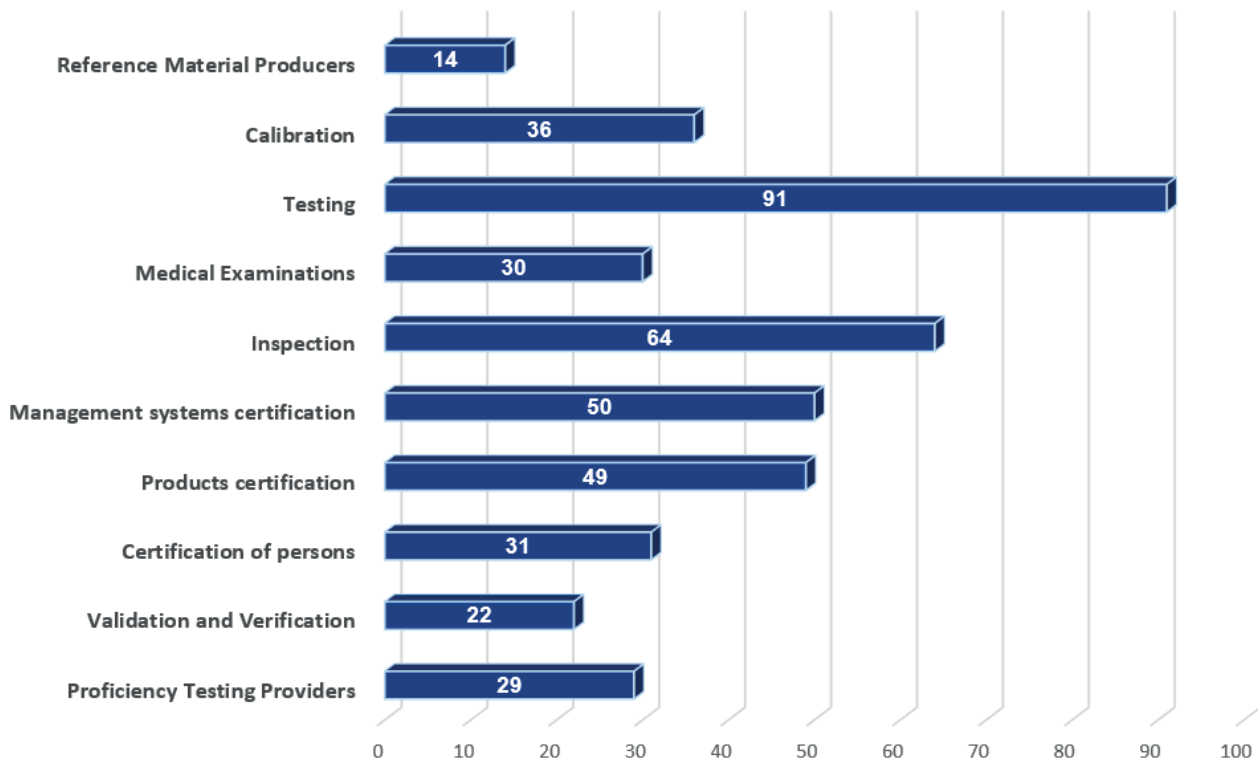
1 - APPROVAL AND RE-APPROVAL OF EVALUATORS

In 2017, 79 evaluators have been re-approved, i.e. acknowledged for having all technical competences to perform EA peer evaluations under specific accreditation scopes:

- 16 Team Leaders (TL);
- 5 Deputy Team Leaders (DTL);
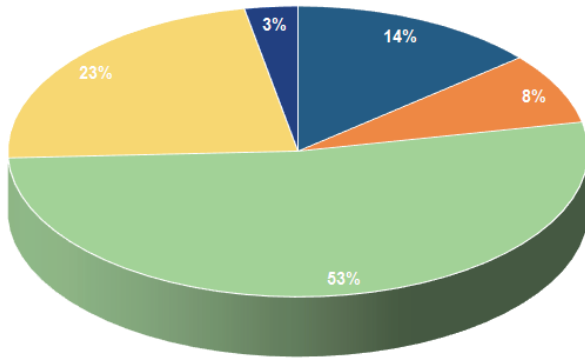- 58 Team Members (TM).

68 of those evaluators were re-approved by the EA Secretariat and 11 critical cases were re-approved by the MAC Management Group. One evaluator was disqualified until he attended a refresher training session.

Furthermore, 44 Trainee Team Members were approved in 2017.

Number of evaluators by scope in 2017

Breakdown of evaluators per qualification based on a total of 146 evaluators

By end of 2017, a total of 146 evaluators are authorized to perform peer evaluations on behalf of EA.

It is worth noting that 121 evaluators were assigned to carry out the 18 peer evaluations totalized in 2017.

Number of evaluators per qualification	
Team Leader (TL)	20
Deputy Team Leader (DTL)	12
Team Member (TM)	77
Trainee	33
Observer	4

2 - TRAINING OF PEER EVALUATORS

The issue of evaluator resource is currently a priority issue on the MAC agenda. In order to support further development of EA's pool of evaluators, several training activities as mentioned below took place in 2017. The 2018 training plan has also been reinforced.

The EA Laboratory Committee (LC) organised a workshop on accreditation of Reference Materials Producers (RMP) against EN ISO 17034:2016 on 30-31 May 2017 in Milan, Italy. This workshop, specifically targeted to potential ISO 17034 peer evaluators, was intended to support the expansion of the EA MLA to include EN ISO 17034. More than 20 participants, including representation of 18 EA NABs, attended the session.

The EA MLA Council also organised a newcomer training session dedicated to potential new evaluators on 13-15 June 2017 in Utrecht, Netherlands, in order to support further development of EA's pool of evaluators. More than 20 participants, including representation of 20 EA NABs, attended the session.

Finally, two refresher training sessions were held on 6-7 and 14-15 December 2017 in Utrecht, The Netherlands, in order for Team Leaders and Deputy Team Leaders to be well prepared and able to perform evaluations according to the new EN ISO/IEC 17011 published in November 2017. The objective of these workshops, attended by a total of about 40 participants, was to exchange information with the aim to enhance harmonisation and use of best practices between evaluators.
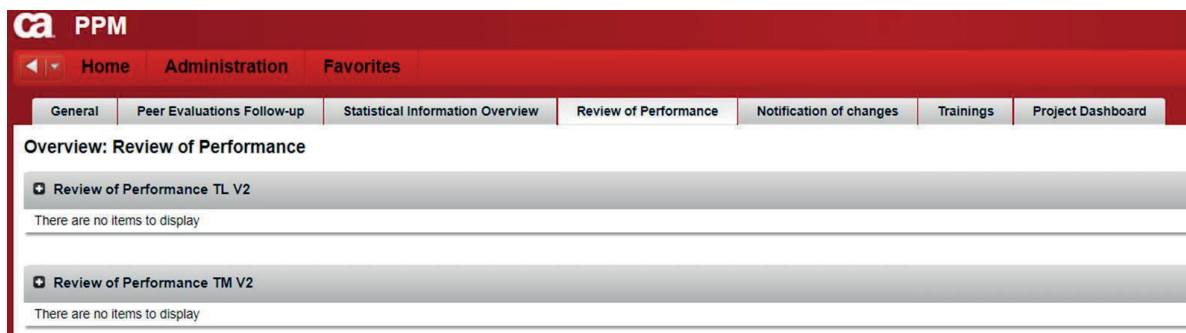

Refresher training session organised in December 2017 in RvA offices (Utrecht - The Netherlands)

9 - IMPROVING THE EA PEER-EVALUATION PROCESS

The EA peer-evaluation process is under ongoing review by EA internal auditors and ILAC/IAF peer evaluators as part of the evaluation program for regional cooperation.

1 - IT PROJECT FOR EA EVALUATORS' AND PEER EVALUATIONS' MANAGEMENT

The development of the specific IT tool for an improved management of peer evaluations and peer evaluators has been progressing according to the plan in 2017. The aim of the new tool is to manage peer evaluations and evaluators in a more efficient way.

After tests had been carried out by MAC Members, Team Leaders, Deputy Team Leaders and Team Members, the tool was demonstrated at the two refresher training sessions held in December 2017.

The brand-new IT tool should be launched in 2018 to be used by all the persons involved in the peer-evaluation system, i.e. the MAC Secretariat, the MAC Management Group Members, Team Members, Team Leaders and Deputy Team Leaders, NABs under evaluation, trainers, all with dedicated access rights. The new tool will offer functionalities that will lead to stop using a certain number of forms and templates, while giving users dedicated access to peer-evaluation records and documents in a more friendly and convenient way. Data on peer evaluations will also be stored to facilitate sharing and consultation by those involved in the process.

2 - MAC PROJECT ON REENGINEERING THE PEER-EVALUATION SYSTEM

The EA peer-evaluation process is under continuous review. Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 reinforces the role of EA and its peer-evaluation role in both voluntary and regulated sectors. EA shall support and harmonize the implementation of stringent rules to achieve consistency throughout Europe, as well as greater transparency and acceptability to all, including national authorities. The peer-evaluation process is also further strengthened to accommodate the specific needs of regulatory fields in order to raise the reassurance of sector-based stakeholders and regulators that accreditation bodies' technical competence is thoroughly assessed.

The MAC project to reengineer the peer-evaluation system has been progressed in 2017.

Further to an extensive survey and subsequent workshop session on how to improve the EA peer-evaluation process that had been carried out within the MAC in 2016, the MAC appointed 10 TFGs to further develop proposals agreed at the April 2017 meeting. The conveners of those TFGs should present proposals based on specific actions for review by the MAC MG in April 2018. The TFGs will then draft a global implementation plan to be endorsed by the MAC in October 2018.

How to increase EA's pool of evaluators, how to improve the monitoring of transition to standards, how to better manage the process for dealing with changes notified to the MAC by NABs' members, how to translate the IAF resolution adopted in New Delhi on peer evaluation of IAF sub-scopes in the EA peer-evaluation system, are also being discussed in the MAC.

10 - DEVELOPMENT OF THE EA MLA

The landmark in the EA MLA development in 2017 consisted in paving the way for the launch of the accreditation scope for Reference Materials Producers (RMP).

In May 2017, the EA General Assembly, acting upon the recommendation from the Executive Committee and considering *EA Resolution 2010 (25) 13*, has approved to expand the scope of the EA MLA for Reference Materials Producers (RMP) as new level 2 conformity assessment activity using EN ISO 17034 as a new level 3 normative document (*EA Resolution 2017 (39) 18*). The EA General Assembly, acting upon the recommendation from the Multilateral Agreement Council, has also agreed that EA applies to ILAC for extending the scope of EA as a new recognized region for the scope "Reference Materials Producers – EN ISO 17034" (*EA Resolution 2017 (39) 20*).

Still in May 2017, the EA General Assembly, acting upon the recommendation from the MAC, has approved the launching of the EA MLA for Reference Materials Producers (EN ISO 17034) during the MAC meeting in April 2019, provided that at least three members are successfully peer-evaluated by that date (*EA Resolution 2017 (39) 19*).

Subsequently, at its meeting in October 2017, the EA MAC has endorsed a formal document that supports harmonisation of practical issues in peer evaluations intended for the launch of the EA MLA for Reference Materials Producers (EN ISO 17034).

Moreover, the EA Laboratory Committee organised in May 2017 a workshop on accreditation of RMP, specifically aimed at potential ISO 17034 peer evaluators, in order to support the expansion of the EA MLA to include this standard. It has been decided, both at the EA and international levels, not to develop any additional guidance to EN ISO 17034. Evaluations of national accreditation bodies, and therefore the EA MLA, will be based on the standard EN ISO 17034:2016.

The first peer evaluations for extension to the field of Reference Materials Producers have been scheduled in 2018.

Workshop on accreditation of RMP hosted in May 2017 by ACCREDIA (Italy)

11 - COOPERATION WITH ILAC/IAF : ILAC/IAF PEER EVALUATION OF EA

EA is a regional cooperation body recognised by ILAC and IAF: the EA MLA is recognised by both organisations and covered by their respective arrangements. In concrete terms, a report or certificate issued by a conformity assessment body accredited by an EA MLA signatory is recognised by the signatories to the IAF and ILAC multilateral agreements. The EA MLA acts as a world-wilde passport to trade.

1 - ILAC/IAF EVALUATION FOR THE EXTENSION OF EA'S MRA/MLA SIGNATORY STATUS TO GHG VALIDATION & VERIFICATION AND PTP

The successful evaluation by ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation) and IAF (International Accreditation Forum) for the extension of EA's MLA/MRA signatory status to accreditation of GHG Validation & Verification Bodies (ISO 14065) and Proficiency Testing Providers (PTP, ISO/IEC 17043) took place in May and June 2017. The EA MAC meeting in April 2017 was witnessed, and two EA NABs were witnessed by the ILAC/IAF team for their peer evaluation for GHG Validation & Verification and PTP.

In addition to those onsite and witnessing activities, ILAC/IAF evaluators were in Paris for the evaluation of the EA Secretariat on 25 and 26 May 2017.

Evaluation by the ILAC/IAF evaluators of the EA Secretariat

In autumn 2017, a TFG was appointed by ILAC/IAF to review the evaluation report; a positive recommendation has finally been sent to the relevant decision-making committees of ILAC/IAF.

A formal decision on the scope extension for GHG Validation & Verification and PTP should be made by ILAC and IAF in spring 2018.

2 - EA'S APPLICATION FOR THE EXTENSION OF EA'S MRA SIGNATORY STATUS TO RMP

In May 2017, the EA General Assembly, acting upon the recommendation from the EA MAC, agreed that EA applies to ILAC for extending the scope of EA as a recognized region for the scope "Reference Material Producers – EN ISO/IEC 17034".

Note: EA's application has been accepted by the ILAC Arrangement Management Committee (AMC) in January 2018.

3 - EA'S APPLICATION FOR IAF MLA SUB-SCOPES

In parallel, according to the new IAF procedure for the evaluation of Accreditation Bodies and Regional Cooperation Bodies, EA renewed its application for the extension of its IAF MLA signatory status to the following management system sub-scopes:
•   Information Security Management Systems (ISMS);
•   Food Safety Management System (FSMS);
•   Medical Devices - Quality Management Systems (MDMS).

The application is under review by IAF; a decision is expected for spring 2018.

The full re-evaluation of EA by ILAC/IAF is planned for July 2018. All regional evaluators have already been appointed.

ANNEX 1 - EA MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT SIGNATORIES (31 DECEMBER 2017)

	CALIBRATION LABORATORIES	TESTING and MEDICAL LABORATORIES	CERTIFICATION BODIES - PRODUCTS	CERTIFICATION BODIES - PERSONS	CERTIFICATION BODIES - MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	VALIDATION & VERIFICATION BODIES	INSPECTION BODIES	PROFICIENCY TESTING PROVIDERS
ALBANIA - **DPA**		√*						
AUSTRIA - **AA**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
BELGIUM - **BELAC**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉
BULGARIA – **BAS**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
CROATIA - **HAA**	√	√	√	√	√			
CYPRUS – **CYS**	√	√				√	√	
CZECH REPUBLIC - **CAI**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉
DENMARK - **DANAK**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉
ESTONIA - **EAK**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
FINLAND - **FINAS**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉
FRANCE – **COFRAC**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉
FYROM - **IARM**	√	√	√				√	
GERMANY - **DAkkS**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
GREECE - **ESYD**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉
HUNGARY – **NAH**	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉	
IRELAND - **INAB**	√	√	√		√		√	
ITALY - **ACCREDIA**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉
LATVIA - **LATAK**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
LITHUANIA - **LA**	√	◉	√	√	√		√	
LUXEMBURG - **OLAS**	√	√	√		√		√	
MALTA – **NAB-MALTA**	√	√*					√	
NETHERLANDS - **RvA**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉
NORWAY - **NA**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉
POLAND - **PCA**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉
PORTUGAL - **IPAC**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
ROMANIA - **RENAR**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉
SERBIA - **ATS**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
SLOVAKIA - **SNAS**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
SLOVENIA - **SA**	√	√*	√	√	√	√	√	
SPAIN - **ENAC**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉
SWEDEN – **SWEDAC**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉
SWITZERLAND - **SAS**	√	√	√	√	√		√	
TURKEY – **TURKAK**	√	√	√	√	√		√	◉
UNITED KINGDOM - **UKAS**	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	◉

◉ *Signatory in 2017*
* *Signatory for testing laboratories only; not signatory for medical laboratories.*

ANNEX 2 - EA BILATERAL AGREEMENT SIGNATORIES (31 DECEMBER 2017)

	CALIBRATION LABORATORIES	TESTING and MEDICAL LABORATORIES	CERTIFICATION BODIES - PRODUCTS	CERTIFICATION BODIES - PERSONS	CERTIFICATION BODIES - MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	VALIDATION & VERIFICATION BODIES	INSPECTION BODIES	PROFICIENCY TESTING PROVIDERS
ALGERIA - **ALGERAC**	◉	◉*					◉	
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA - **BATA**	√	√*					√	
GEORGIA - **GAC**	◉	◉*	◉	◉			◉	
ISRAEL - **ISRAC**	√	√					√	
REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA - **MOLDAC**	◉	◉	◉		◉		◉	
UKRAINE – **NAAU**	√	√*	√	√	√		√	
TUNISIA - **TUNAC**	√	√*			√		√	

◉ *Signatory in 2017*
* *Signatory for testing laboratories only; not signatory for medical laboratories.*

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