



ILAC Strategic Plan

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To obtain permission or for further assistance, please contact:

The ILAC Secretariat

PO Box 7507

Silverwater NSW 2128

Australia

Fax: +61 2 9736 8373

Email: ilac@nata.com.au

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PREAMBLE

This document presents the ILAC Strategic Plan for the period 2009 to 2012 inclusive. It is supplemented by operational plans for each ILAC committee. Together, these documents define the work of ILAC.

PURPOSE

This Plan states the vision, mission, goals and associated strategies of ILAC.

AUTHORSHIP

The ILAC Executive Committee, in consultation with the ILAC membership, prepared this revision to the 2004 ILAC Strategic and Business Plan.

Following the publication of ILAC-R1:09/2009 Classification and Publication of ILAC Documents, which includes a revision of the ILAC document classification system, all documents previously published as Secretariat or S Series documents have been relocated to the newly created category of ILAC-R or Rules (Requirements) documents. This document, previously published as ILAC-S3:12/2008 ILAC Strategic Plan, has been revised to reflect the new classification systems and to update document references where necessary. The content of this document has otherwise not been reviewed or amended.

1. INTRODUCTION

The International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) is the global authority on laboratory accreditation. It also has parallel authority with the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) for inspection body accreditation. Its membership includes accreditation bodies and stakeholder organisations throughout the world.

ILAC was initially established in 1977 as a conference with the aim to promote international acceptance of endorsed test reports and calibration certificates issued by accredited laboratories. In 1996, it became a formal Cooperation chartered to establish a network of mutual recognition arrangements among accreditation bodies that would fulfil this aim, and in 2000 the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement) was established. In 2003, ILAC was incorporated in the Netherlands.

ILAC provides the global perspective and infrastructure that supports the world-wide demonstration of competence and equivalence of testing and calibration laboratories, inspection bodies and other types of bodies serving or supporting such laboratories and inspection bodies through accreditation. Accreditation of laboratories and inspection bodies supports activities within and between economies including trade, protection of health, safety and the environment for the public benefit. Its fundamental purpose is to provide confidence in the competence of bodies supporting these activities.

Globalization has increased the need for credible conformity assessment. To reduce technical barriers to trade and support the worldwide movement of products, services, and systems, it is vital that associated accreditation systems be accepted internationally. Within this environment, ILAC has traditionally had four fundamental and complementary roles:

1. Maintaining state-of-the-art principles for assessing the competence of an accredited laboratory to test and or calibrate, and of an inspection body to inspect, against applicable norms, standards and other requirements included in its scope of accreditation.
2. Working to ensure that regulators and other users of services world-wide understand, and accept accreditation covered in the ILAC Arrangement as the preferred tool for enhancing confidence and credibility as well as eliminating duplication of activity.
3. Assisting members, especially members of developing economies, to ensure that all accreditation systems achieve the same level of competence.
4. Ensuring that all documentation supporting the internationally harmonised activities of ILAC members within the ILAC Arrangement adds value to market acceptance of goods and services and increases confidence in accreditation.

The ILAC Arrangement is an international, multilateral mutual recognition arrangement for accreditation bodies. Participating accreditation bodies agree to promote acceptance of the equivalence of endorsed calibration, test and inspection reports. Each accreditation body undergoes peer evaluation according to ILAC rules and procedures prior to becoming a signatory to the Arrangement. Accreditation bodies agree to:

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- ◆ Satisfy the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011 together with related documents mandated by ILAC.
 - ◆ Ensure that the laboratories and inspection bodies they accredit satisfy the requirements of the appropriate guides and standards (e.g. ISO/IEC 17025, ISO/IEC 17020 & ISO 15189) together with related documents mandated by ILAC and are competent to perform the tasks as per their scope of accreditation; and
 - ◆ Abide by the ILAC Arrangement terms and conditions and ensure they maintain their competence to provide accreditation services.

ILAC values the critical complementary and supportive activities of its Regional Cooperation Body members in the realisation of its vision, mission, goals and associated strategies. The Regional Cooperation Body members through administration of their multilateral mutual recognition arrangements provide virtually all of the peer evaluation resources and much of the technical inputs to ILAC documents

2. ILAC VISION (what we aspire to achieve)

Accredited once accepted everywhere.

3. ILAC MISSION (what we aim to be)

The mission of ILAC is to be *the* global solution for the national, regional and international demonstration of equivalence of reliable results from testing, calibration, inspection and related activities* in both voluntary and mandatory fields/sectors.

***Related activities are those such as reference materials, proficiency testing and sampling.**

4. GOALS AND STRATEGIES (how to fulfil the mission)

- 4.1 Provide an effective international multilateral mutual recognition arrangement that identifies and recognises competent accreditation bodies, that attest the competence of testing/calibration laboratories, inspection bodies, and related support services.
 - 4.1.1 Continue to develop the ILAC Arrangement to meet the needs of members, regulators and communities and to facilitate global trade.
 - 4.1.2 Work to further enhance the recognition, acceptance, credibility and effectiveness and to harmonise the ILAC Arrangement with Regional Cooperation Body members.
- 4.2 Ensure sound principles and practices are maintained within the global accreditation system, in cooperation with the membership, stakeholders, users and other related bodies;

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- 4.2.1 Identify, develop, improve and promote the body of accreditation knowledge required to support technical competence.
 - 4.2.2 Support the education in and awareness of metrological principles, including measurement uncertainty and traceability, within the accreditation framework to ensure comparability of results used by decision-makers.
 - 4.2.3 Identify and disseminate knowledge about proficiency testing programs, needs and related policy issues.
 - 4.2.4 Identify needs for laboratory, inspection body, and related accreditation services and their supporting infrastructure in developing economies.
 - 4.2.5 Develop, review and promote ILAC policies and positions in the development and application of standards and guidelines for accreditation related to the ILAC areas of interest.
 - 4.2.6 Develop and review policies and guidelines, in collaboration with others, for the publication and dissemination of ILAC information.
 - 4.2.7 Ensure that all ILAC documents are reviewed and revised, as needed, or at least every four-years.
 - 4.2.8 Facilitate the transfer of the body of accreditation knowledge to all interested parties with particular emphasis on ILAC Associates, Affiliates and potential new members.
- 4.3 Promote laboratory, inspection body and related service provider accreditation to protect health, safety, and the environment, to avoid duplication of activity, and to facilitate global trade, health, safety and environmental goals:
- 4.3.1 Contribute to the health, environmental and safety goals of the global community by providing proper mechanisms to ensure reliable, accurate and comparable conformity assessment results, which are expressed in a relevant and transparent way.
 - 4.3.2 Provide education and information/knowledge transfer regarding accreditation of laboratories, inspection bodies and related support services globally.
 - 4.3.3 Identify, understand and develop initiatives to meet regulatory, procurement, industry and professional needs.
 - 4.3.4 Develop and implement marketing activities that target current and future international specifiers of accreditation.
 - 4.3.5 Develop effective marketing, communications and technical assistance programs.

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- 4.4 Work to ensure that regulatory authorities and communities world-wide understand, accept and demand accreditation covered by the ILAC Arrangement as the preferred tool for enhancing confidence of users in the credibility of conformity assessment results, eliminating duplication of activity and facilitating global trade, health, safety and environmental goals.
 - 4.4.1 Promote the benefits of the ILAC Arrangement and accreditation of laboratories, inspection bodies and related service providers by focusing communications and marketing to facilitate recognition of the ILAC Arrangement by industry, government and other end users of accredited services.
 - 4.4.2 Interact with and attract other accreditation organisations (including those operated by regulators) to buy into ILAC solutions and/or learn from their experience to improve ILAC's processes.
 - 4.4.3 Identify new areas where ILAC can support the goals of the global community, both for the elimination of technical barriers to trade and in support of values such as ecological sustainability, health and safety of humanity, animals and nature.
 - 4.5 Develop and maintain key relationships.
 - 4.5.1 Optimize cooperation with the International Accreditation Forum (IAF).
 - 4.5.2 Develop, maintain and review partnerships with key players in government, industry and conformity assessment bodies as well as metrology, standards writing and professional organisations in order to identify, understand and develop initiatives to meet regulatory, procurement, industry and professional needs.
 - 4.5.3 Enhance the cooperation with regional accreditation networks by noting and understanding regional developments and needs.
 - 4.6 Provide effective administrative resources to support the operation of ILAC
 - 4.6.1 Collect, analyse and disseminate information to assist in the achievement of ILAC's mission and vision.
 - 4.6.2 Maintain continual improvement efforts on administrative and communication processes, particularly the ILAC website.
 - 4.6.3 Ensure that ILAC is able to meet its financial obligations by annually adopting appropriate budgets for funding operations and projects and annually setting membership dues to attain self-sufficiency by 2012, while maintaining an adequate surplus.