



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
between
(Members of) the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC)
and
The International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and the IEC
Conformity Assessment Schemes

1 Background

Members of the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation and the IEC Conformity Assessment Schemes have been cooperating on a number of technical and administrative issues to maximise the efficiencies of member bodies when dealing with common testing laboratory clients. This cooperation has included conduct of a series of joint ILAC/IECEE laboratory assessments; recognition of laboratory accreditation by IECEx; the establishment of a Joint ILAC/IEC-CAB Technical Panel; and a Joint Policy Panel to explore possibilities for recognition of the respective organisation's assessments and related activities. Such recognition should facilitate the future conduct of relevant laboratory assessments, reduce duplication of activities and maximise the harmony in technical evaluations conducted by both ILAC and IEC.

As a result of confidence established between the IEC-CAB and Members of ILAC, the Parties have agreed to formalise their future cooperation and the recognitions that each Party may acknowledge the other Party's relevant activities. Those Members of ILAC and Representatives of the IEC-CAB Schemes which accept the provisions of this MOU are shown as signatories in the Annex to this MOU.

2 Understanding

It is agreed between the ILAC Members and the IEC-Conformity Assessment Schemes signing this MOU that the Parties will cooperate by:

- (a) Maintaining a Joint ILAC-IEC/CAB Technical Panel to facilitate common approaches in interpretation and application of ISO/IEC 17025 and relevant technical standards, to cooperate in relevant

proficiency testing schemes, and to harmonise assessment procedures to the maximum extent possible for common testing laboratory clients.

In maintaining this Panel, both Parties recognise that specific technical issues may be referred to either (or both) of the ILAC Accreditation Committee (AIC) and the relevant laboratory technical committees of the IEC-CAB schemes (CTL, ExTAG etc); and where appropriate, to the relevant IEC technical committee.

To consider issues of common application of ISO/IEC 17025 for the relevant laboratories, the Parties may establish a Joint Interpretation Panel, comprising appropriate members of the relevant IEC committees and the ILAC Accreditation Committee (AIC). Such interpretations will be published and made available to all Members of ILAC and the IEC.

- (b) Wherever possible and reasonable, and with the agreement of the affected laboratories, conducting joint assessments of common testing laboratory clients;
- (c) Developing a basis for recognition of the roles of each Party's technical and lead assessors in the conduct of joint assessments, where applicable;
- (d) Sharing interpretations of common technical issues of relevance to common, client laboratories; and
- (e) Where practicable, conducting joint work on development of technical guides, standards, procedures and policies relevant to the affected laboratories.

3 Recognition

It is agreed between ILAC and the IEC that the signatories to this MOU may on a case by case basis use the results of each other's assessments, joint or otherwise, in the conduct of their assessment or peer review activities. Use of assessment results is aimed at efficient use of resources and avoidance of duplication. The scope of cooperation may vary depending on the policies of individual ILAC Member bodies and of the IEC Schemes, but may include inputs to surveillance of laboratories, inputs to acceptance decisions and recognition of assessors provided by each Party.

4 Duration

Initially, this MOU is established for a period of five (5) years from the 9 February 2005. The effectiveness of the MOU and its content will be

reviewed throughout the period of its implementation. The focal point for such review will be the Joint ILAC/IEC-CAB Policy Panel, advised where necessary, by the Joint ILAC/IEC-CAB Technical Panel.

The MOU may be renewed with the agreement of both Parties.

5 Termination

The MOU may be terminated by either Party, subject to six (6) months' written notice.

6 Commencement

This Memorandum of Understanding is effective from 9 February 2005.

Additional Signatories accepting this MOU are shown in the Annex to this MOU.

Signed:

Chair of ILAC

General Secretary of the IEC

