



Association of British Certification Bodies

**Minutes of the Management Systems Sector Committee Meeting
held on Tuesday 11 October 2011 at AFNOR UK, Regus House, Victory Way,
Admirals Park, Crossways, Dartford, DA2 6DQ**

Members Present:

Mr Steve Russell	Ascertiva Group, Chairman
Mr Norman Charters	Certification International
Mr Ian Knott	SIRA
Mr Andrew Launn	BSI
Ms Sabrina Brigitte	AFNOR UK
Mr Bernard Johnson	Intertek
Mr Gavin Stones	National Measurement Office
Mr David Fenn	The British Assessment Bureau
Ms Samantha Hicks	The British Assessment Bureau

In Attendance:

Mr Trevor Nash Chief Executive

1.0 Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Bernard Anderson and from Martin Gainey, for whom Gavin Stones was deputising.

Brian Johnson informed the Committee that Lynn Ward is no longer with Intertek and that he is their new representative on the Committee.

2.0 Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 July 2011

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

3.0 Matters Arising from the Minutes not Covered Elsewhere on the Agenda

3.1 Ex Minute 3.2 - Representation on CASCO Working Groups

Trevor Nash reported that there are still opportunities for ABCB to nominate Members to represent EFAC on CASCO Working Groups. Any Members who are interested should contact him and he will then liaise with the EFAC Chairman.

Action: Members

4.0 Liaison Reports

4.1 SBAC/CBMC

Steve Russell reported that he had attended the last meeting and that the latest vote on AS9104 had attracted 75 comments. These comments now need to be reviewed to determine whether any are of a technical nature and dependant on this there will be a decision on whether a further ballot is required.

A matrix has been drawn up of all the UK AS 9100 series aerospace assessors so that UKAS can ensure that, wherever possible, duplication of witnessed assessments of auditors can be avoided and that eventually all auditors will have been witnessed (some external resource assessors work for several certification bodies and have been witnessed by UKAS several times).

Concern has been expressed by IAQG (International Aerospace Quality Group) that not all AS9100 certified organisations will complete the transition to the new edition of the standards by the July 2012 deadline. All certification bodies have been contacted and requested to complete a feedback questionnaire to IAQG on their plans for transition and the likelihood of not transferring all their clients by the deadline. The IAQG will then collate this data and make a decision on whether to extend the deadline.

4.2 JTISC

Andrew Launn reported that he had been unable to find someone to deputise for Rose Jones at the last meeting.

Ian Knott asked who owned the TickIT scheme and whether UKAS were aware of the current position regarding TickIT Plus as there seemed to be a lack of information. It was noted by Members that UKAS had not been assessing TickIT for some time. Trevor Nash agreed to request an update from UKAS.

Action: Trevor Nash

Post Meeting note: According to the TickIT website, it is managed and maintained by the TickIT Office, a department within BSI Standards with responsibility for all aspects of standardisation in information systems and communications. Any Members requiring more detailed information on TickITPlus should contact the JTISC Chairman Peter Lawrence at plawren1@csc.com.

4.3 DIQF

Andrew Launn reported that he had responded to the DQA Consultation Paper on behalf of ABCB.

There had been a meeting the previous week. MoD has asked UKAS to assist in the development of a defence industry sector scheme and Kevin Thomas of MoD is convinced the proposed scheme will proceed, although ABCB, IIOC and SMMT are advising caution.

4.4 SES/1/1

There have been no meetings of SES/1/1 since the last Meeting.

5.0 **ISO/IEC 17021:2011 Transition**

Trevor Nash reported that by the cut off date, 36% of UKAS accredited certification bodies had failed to submit their gap analyses. A small number of these had requested an extension of the timescale.

UKAS are prioritising their review of gap analyses according to assessment timescales. UKAS has confirmed that the timescales associated with the transition remain as given in the letter from Kevin Belson. Andrew Launn reported that, at present, UKAS are not responding on the gap analyses unless they are requested to do so.

UKAS has completed staff training using the IAF training material augmented with some UKAS specific training. The opportunity had also been taken to address other issues during the training.

David Fenn reported that during a recent surveillance visit, the UKAS Assessment Manager suggested that a consequence of the ISO/IEC 17021:2011 transition would be that some certification bodies would lose some of their scopes of accreditation as they could not demonstrate their competence. Members considered that the changes to the standard were such that no major issues should arise as a result of the 2011 version. Norman Charters reported that he had been advised that a 'PowerPoint' presentation followed by examination does not constitute effective training.

Members expressed concern that some staff who had been regarded as competent for many years could, as a result of the UKAS approach to assessing competence, no longer be considered competent. This could result in questions concerning their future employability and potentially raise significant employment law issues for certification bodies.

Members were asked to provide Trevor Nash with their experiences of the management of the transition process.

Action: Members

6.0 Meetings

6.1 EFAC 29/30 September

Trevor Nash reported that only the Chairman, he and one other member had attended the meeting. Ivan Savov had indicated his intention of standing down as EFAC Chairman when the position came up for re-election in September 2012. Progress is at last being made with the establishment of EFAC as a legal entity in Belgium.

6.2 EACC 5 October

The following were the significant items from the EACC meeting:

- It was agreed to start work on revising the Terms of Reference of EACC as they are now ten years old.
- Stakeholders were invited to nominate a representative to the review panel which provides an opinion on questions submitted to the EACC preparatory meeting and Trevor Nash was nominated.
- It was agreed that work would start on drafting terms of reference for a forum for the accreditation of GHG verifiers.
- There is an issue with the transition from EN 16001 to ISO 50001 (energy management systems). ISO 50001 will be published as a European Standard in October 2011 and EN 16001 will be withdrawn on 16 July 2012, by which time the transition should be completed as certification to EN 16001 will no longer valid. Accreditation Bodies are not happy with this timescale unless it can be assumed that the transition does not require any additional audit. EA members were asked to confirm to the Chairman that this is the case, if not he will inform CEN that the transition period is too short.
- There is a proposed ETSI scheme for service provider conformity assessment for electronic signatures and infrastructures.
- A two year transition for ISO 20000-1: 2011 was proposed and will be taken to IAF.
- It was agreed to propose a new work item to revise EA-6/02 – welding.
- The EA Environmental Working Group has not met for some time as it has been without a convenor since Andrew Marlow left UKAS. The proposed merging of it with the GHG group has, therefore, not happened. There is a need for an environmental group to deal with sector schemes and it is proposed to start afresh by asking members to nominate representatives.

- It was agreed to propose a new work item to harmonise accreditation of OHSAS 18001.
- The suggested revision of EA-7/04 –legal compliance, to include other management systems will not proceed as the initial idea came from the environmental WG which is not currently meeting and no demand has come from any of the other EA sub-committees, such as food.

6.3 IAF TC 2 – 11 November

Trevor Nash reported that he had received the agenda for the IAF TC meeting but this only covered reports from Working Groups/Task Forces and liaisons. As yet he had not received any information on discussion items.

Ian Knott asked about the status of the IAF decision log. Trevor Nash replied that decisions recorded in the log are binding on IAF member accreditation bodies. He added that there was a long outstanding item for the decision log to be published on the IAF website. Trevor Nash agreed to circulate the latest copy of the decision log with the minutes.

Action: Trevor Nash

7.0 UKAS

7.1 UKAS Update

Trevor Nash reported on information provided to the Management Committee by Jeff Ruddle. The new UKAS business system had been operating for three months and there was increased staff confidence in the system. There were still a few teething problems arising from situations that could not have been predicted and there were also some activities, for example, visit booking for which the new system was not being used as quickly as planned. The launch of the web portal will now be early 2012.

Recruitment of Assessment Managers to the Certification Section has continued and when the last recruits join, the section will be at its budgeted establishment of seventeen. Three Assessment Managers have recently been trained as decision makers and are currently performing this role under supervision.

Two Special Support Assessment Managers, Alistair Hunter and Chris Bestwick, have been appointed and will split their time between supervision and assessing. The recruitment of a new Accreditation Manager is in the final stages and this will enable Trevor Thompson to return to his previous position at the end of the year.

Post Meeting note: Nigel Overton has been appointed Accreditation Manager for the Certification Section and will commence his duties on 1 January 2012 following a handover period with Trevor Thompson in December. Nigel is currently Accreditation Manager for the Inspection Section and has extensive experience of certification, having worked for a number of certification bodies including BSI, BVQI, BMTrada and Intertek.

There has been an increase in the level of complaints, mainly due to service delivery turnaround times as a result of the new business system. The rate of complaint resolution has, however, continued to improve.

When questioned about progress towards the targets that had been shared with the Association at the seminar in February, Jeff Ruddle replied that progress had not been as quick as he would have liked. KPI's had only been available for the last two to three weeks and there were still some data issues which pointed to things being worse than they are. The new business system will, however, enable UKAS to collect more meaningful and better data and information should be available for the next Meeting. A review of Assessment Managers' case loads has recently taken place and this is expected to be a key to improvement.

The Certification Section continues to be under pressure as the ratio of experienced staff to trainees has been a limiting factor and the three new Assessment Managers will not be fully operational for six months. However, the new business system and improving the performance of the Certification Section continue to remain as priorities for UKAS and now that the new staff are in place certification bodies should start to see improvements over the next six months.

Jeff Ruddle concluded by saying that he was spending 75% of his time on the Certification Section and the aim is for it to become the best performing Section in UKAS.

7.2 Joint Working Group on non-accredited certification

The joint Working Group held its first meeting on 7 October and David Fenn had been elected to Chair the Group. The Group had started by defining the problem which was a lack of understanding, mainly by SME's, who are exposed to the slick marketing initiatives of non-accredited certification bodies.

One particular issue that was identified was that accredited certification bodies, do on occasions issue non-accredited certificates, whilst they are awaiting extensions to scope or because UKAS does not offer accreditation for some activities. This is used by non-accredited bodies as a justification for their activities and causes confusion in the market. It was proposed that accredited bodies should promote that even when they issue non-accredited certificates they use the same processes and comply with ISO/IEC 17021.

Trevor Nash had obtained a legal opinion from BIS regarding the position of certification bodies claiming non-NAB accreditation under Article 7 of Regulation EC765 and this should be used by accredited bodies to promote their position. However, Andrew Launn stated that at present there is no case law to support this opinion and until there is the true legal position will not be clear.

The Working Group had agreed a number of proposed initiatives which will be considered in more detail at the next meeting on 31 January 2012.

7.3 UKAS Technical Advisory Committees

ABCB had nominated Steve Russell and Samantha Hicks as representatives on the Management Systems Technical Advisory Committee. UKAS were finding it difficult to find a Chairman for this committee and it was now the intention for it to meet before the end of the year and to elect a Chairman from amongst its members. One difficulty is finding representatives, with the necessary expertise, from certification bodies' direct customers. Andrew Launn suggested that a member of a certification body's impartiality committee may be appropriate and David Fenn agreed to ask a member of The British Assessment Board's impartiality committee.

Action: David Fenn

7.4 Members' Issues

Steve Russell asked if any Members had any further information regarding certification in the construction sector in China, following Kevin Belson's letter. Trevor Nash agreed to follow this up with UKAS.

Action: Trevor Nash

Post Meeting note: UKAS is continuing to liaise with the Chinese authorities but has no further information and the situation has not changed from that described in Kevin Belson's letter. The UKAS expectation is that their accredited certification bodies will have suspended or withdrawn any certificates issued in the construction sector in China.

A number of Members reported difficulties in planning witnessed assessments and also with Assessment Managers becoming involved in assessments they were witnessing. Trevor Nash reminded Members that improving UKAS assessment was another area identified for ABCB and UKAS to cooperate and agreed to contact Lorraine Turner to progress this.

Action: Trevor Nash

David Fenn asked if there was any information available from BIS regarding their monitoring of UKAS performance in relation to Regulation EC 765. Trevor Nash reported that this was covered by the MoU between BIS and UKAS but he was not aware of any reports being available. He agreed to raise this at the next UKAS PAC meeting.

Action: Trevor Nash

8.0 Any Other Business

Sabrina Brigitte informed the Meeting that she would be returning to the AFNOR Head Office in France at the end of the year and would, therefore, no longer be able to participate in ABCB. Steve Russell thanked her for her contribution and Members offered her their best wishes for the future.

Steve Russell thanked AFNOR UK for their hospitality.

9.0 Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next Meeting will be held on Thursday 26 January 2012 at the Ascertiva Group in Dunstable.

Proposed dates for future Meetings are:

Tuesday 24 April 2012
Tuesday 10 July 2012
Tuesday 11 September 2012