



Association of British Certification Bodies

**Minutes of the Management Systems Sector Committee Meeting
held on Thursday 26 January 2012 at The Ascertiva Group, Warwick House,
Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5ZX**

Members Present:

Mr Steve Russell	Ascertiva Group, Chairman
Mr Norman Charters	Certification International
Mr Ian Knott	SIRA
Ms Jackie Harvey - Watts	BSI
Mr Martin Gainey	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 have been received from Brian Johnson (Intertek), Lee Brankley (UKCARES), Wayne Thomas (SIRA), Guy Tanner (AFNOR UK) and Andrew Launn (BSI) for whom Jackie Harvey-Watts was deputising.

2.0 Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 October 2011

The minutes were agreed as a true record.

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

3.1 Ex Minute 3.1 - Representation on CASCO Working Groups

No members had expressed an interest in representing EFAC on CASCO Working Groups. However, Trevor Nash reported that he has been appointed acting Chairman of EFAC and will review the situation with the outgoing Chairman in February.

3.2 Ex Minute 4.2 - TickIT

See minute 4.2.

3.3 Ex Minute 6.3 - IAF Decision Log

The latest version of the IAF decision log was circulated with the minutes. Ian Knott commented that certification bodies are expected to comply with decisions of the IAF TC but that the information is not published. Trevor Nash reported that there is a long outstanding action at the IAF TC for the decision log to be published on the IAF website and that he would raise the matter at the next IAF TC meeting in April.

Action: Trevor Nash

3.4 Ex Minute 7.3 - UKAS TAC

See minute 7.3.

3.5 Ex Minute 7.4 - China

Trevor Nash reported that he had been informed by UKAS that the situation is unchanged from July 2011 when UKAS sent an update to certification bodies.

Chinese rules require that all EA 28 QMS certificates take account of and include reference to GB/T 50430 but also that only CNAS accredited certificates can reference the GB/T regulation. Therefore this leaves UK CBs unable to issue EA28 QMS certificates in China with UKAS accreditation.

Steve Russell reported that the Ascertiva Group has a positive recommendation from UKAS to issue EA 28 certificates in China and Ian Knott stated that GB/T 50430 is listed on the SIRA schedule of accreditation. Trevor Nash agreed to clarify the situation with UKAS.

Action: Trevor Nash

Post Meeting note: UKAS have responded that this situation should not be the case and will require investigation.

3.6 Ex Minute 7.4 - UKAS Assessment Planning

See Minute 7.1.

3.7 Ex Minute 7.4 - BIS Monitoring of UKAS

See Minute 6.2.

4.0 Liaison Reports

4.1 SBAC/CBMC

Each certification body is being asked to review their own performance and implement appropriate improvements to their

upload process to ensure that reports are uploaded to OASIS in accordance with required timescales and 2012 head office oversights will monitor compliance to the scheme requirements.

CBMC reviewed a presentation provided by S Randall of 2011 oversights which were focused on CB 91XX:2009 transition audits

Common themes noted were:

- Poor planning by certification bodies prior to client audit – lack of stage 1 visits
- Poor process definition by clients
- Auditing not focused on client's customer breakdown
- Auditing not focused on KPI's/OTD
- Poor completion of PEARs
- NC's still not being classified correctly in accordance with the new 9101 definitions
- Certificate decision makers not aware of new 9101 requirements, ineffective review of auditor submissions

The EAQG OPMT Oversight by AAQG had resulted in a major NC being raised by the EAQG OPMT on the UK CBMC concerning auditor authentication decisions conforming to 9104-3 requirements (specifically work experience). A number of reviews have been held with IRCA by the CBMC AAB and an initial response had been provided back to EAQG OPMT, which had been accepted. Further reviews are scheduled for quarter 1 of 2012 with a number of significant actions to be implemented by IRCA.

SR001 dated 4th Nov 2011 has now been released. UKAS advised that all certification bodies had submitted their initial matrices. Certification bodies were reminded that fully populated matrices were required by UKAS by 4 Jan 2012 or UKAS would initiate suspension.

A meeting was held in early December 2011 to draft SR-002. The document has been routed to the IAQG OPMT for comments; aiming for issue in early Jan 2012 along with 9104-1 release.

Certification bodies expressed concerns over delays in aerospace auditor authentication decisions with IRCA who were not meeting the 20 day timescale, even for simple upgrades. Issues with authentication should be raised with the CBMC AAB representative (U Haq).

It is intended to hold a Conference in 2012 targeting scheme manager's and auditor's.

No supplemental oversight is currently being performed by UK IAQG member companies. CBMC is aware that Boeing continues to conduct supplemental oversight (in the UK) in support of their supplier control activities

4.2 JTISC

The Core Scheme Requirements were published as planned before 1 December 2011. The next version of the BPL is in development, and will include additional process definitions and mapping to standard. Additional guidance material to the BPL processes is also being developed.

Published TickITplus documents can be purchased by registered TickITplus assessors at a discount of 50%

UKAS has issued letters to all certification bodies detailing the accreditation requirements. All existing TickIT certifications must be transitioned to TickITplus by 1 December 2014. Accreditation of new certification bodies will require a witnessed assessment which will then enable a successfully witnessed assessor approve other assessors.

Foundation training courses are now publicly available and information can be found on the TickITplus web site. Capability level training courses are still under development and will not be available, until later in the year.

GASQ registration of TickITplus assessors is now available via their web site. TickITplus is seen to be backwardly compatible with TickIT and therefore it is not mandatory for assessors to continue registration with IRCA, once they have been registered as TickITplus assessors. GASQ also handle the accreditation of training courses.

Rose Jones will be having another period of sick leave during May, June and July this year, when she will be unable to attend meetings. Where possible she will review any material output and communicate anything important, but Members may wish to nominate a deputy to attend meetings in her absence.

Action: Members

4.3 DIQF

Jackie Harvey – Watts reported that DIQF had met in December and focussed on their needs and the supply chain. The key areas identified were:

- Counterfeit products
- Third party capability improvement
- Product verification

- Measures of quality performance
- Planning for quality
- Supply chain improvement
- Electronic signatures

Working groups will be established to address each of these.

The Counterfeit Awareness Working Group is planning an awareness event on 20 June and has invited ABCB to present on fraudulent/counterfeit documentation in the supply chain. Andrew Launn has suggested that Dylan Parsons from BSI would be an ideal representative to give this presentation and this was agreed.

4.4 SES/1/1

There was no SES/1/1 report.

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

Lorraine Turner reported at the Management Committee Meeting on 6 December that UKAS is in a better position than with the last transition. However, 20% of certification bodies had still not submitted their gap analyses (by beginning of December 2011), but extensions had been agreed in some instances. Review of 50% of the gap analyses had been completed. This did not meet the original target but they were being prioritised according to the visit programme. Assessment Managers had been asked to advise certification bodies of when they will receive feedback.

Lorraine Turner had been asked whether certification bodies were finding the transition easy and replied that some are and some are not. Some of those that had previously found areas of compliance difficult were continuing to experience the same difficulties. When asked if the stragglers were those that had previously experienced difficulties, Lorraine Turner replied that whilst some had good reasons for delays, most of the stragglers probably were those that found compliance with ISO/IEC 17021 difficult in the past. It was suggested that if these bodies were late in providing information to UKAS it could create a peak in demand for assessment and Lorraine Turner indicated that UKAS would probably have to give an absolute cut off date in the New Year.

Steve Russell reported that the Ascertiva Group had received a positive recommendation at the first attempt and had experienced no problems. The three assessors involved had a consistent approach to assessment to ISO/IEC 17021:2011. Steve Russell recommended that Members push UKAS to get their transition assessment completed as soon as possible.

Ian Knott asked how much account was taken of the gap analysis and Steve Russell replied that it had been taken fully into account.

David Fenn reported that the British Assessment Board had received two visits, one of which had raised a significant issue. However, he felt that the transition was moving in the right direction and Kevin Belson had agreed to provide guidance.

Other Members reported that they had no real experience of the transition to date.

6.0 Meetings

6.1 UKAS AGM - 18 October

Trevor Nash had attended this meeting. UKAS turnover was up 7.2% to just over £19M and profit after tax was £1.14M partly driven by synergies between UKAS and CPA following closure of the CPA office in Sheffield. UKAS delivered a record number of 16,203 days. Certification represented 15% of the volume.

Lord Lindsay was re-elected Chairman and Sir Duncan Nichol a director. The Department of Health was appointed as an additional nominating body of UKAS.

Non-executive directors' remuneration was increased by 3% that being the lower of the Retail Price Index and the company's annual salary award. The remuneration committee's proposals for executive directors' salary increases were agreed.

6.2 UKAS PAC - 24 November

Trevor Nash had attended this meeting. There was a report back on the regulatory enforcement consultation document and the economic benefits report, covered under matters arising.

There was also a report back on the correspondence between ABCB and BIS regarding non-accredited certification which resulted in the statement from BIS regarding the legal position, under Regulation EC 765, of certification bodies claiming to be accredited by organisation other than UKAS.

Following the peer evaluation initially carried out in November 2009 it was reported that UKAS had its status as an EA MLA signatory confirmed in October 2011. There was a question about the transparency of the peer evaluation process particularly as the time between the evaluation and re-confirmation of UKAS's status was almost two years. It was considered that the long time from the visit to resolution had prompted questions of confidence in UKAS.

This led to a similar question, raised by Trevor Nash, concerning the BIS monitoring of UKAS as required by the MoU. It was reiterated that the monitoring was confidential but agreed that a confirmation by BIS that it was doing what is required to do, by the MoU, would help.

There was a report back on the UKAS Board meeting. UKAS has introduced a bribery policy to comply with the bribery act. Lord Young has returned from the cold and is back on the cutting regulation agenda. The only issue on finance is with funding of the awareness campaign. Last year funding was £180K and this year's budget is for £99K, however UKAS could get nothing. They are currently fighting for £50K. Martin Gainey explained that any public expenditure on marketing in excess of £25k requires ministerial approval. The Board had a debate on the risk of UKAS overstretching itself due to the large number of new initiatives.

6.3 IAF TC - 2 – 11 November

The IAF meetings scheduled to take place in Bangkok were cancelled due to the floods. It is not intended to re-schedule the meetings and urgent business is being conducted by email. The main issue so far is the draft IAF budget for 2012 which includes increased subscription income of 18% the majority of which would have to be collected through increased subscription rates. Subscription income is planned to increase by over 50% over the next three years. This has arisen due to the costs of the newly appointed IAF secretariat. The budget was approved with 47 voting in favour, ten against and three abstaining. ABCB was the only association member to vote against. Others voting against included UKAS. ABCB's subscription has increased from \$4620 fro 2011 to \$5439 for 2012, an increase of 17.3%.

The Ballot on the Market Surveillance Visits to Certified Organizations (IAF-GM-11-027) was circulated to Members on 22 November 2011 for 30 day vote. Twenty seven members voted in favour and 10 members voting against the proposed draft (ABCB, IIOC, EFAC, IAAR and accreditation bodies from Greece, France, Austria, Tunisia, Denmark and Sweden). Three members abstained (Finland, Germany and A2LA). Accordingly the ballot has been passed and the comments received will be referred to the Chair of the Technical Committee and the Convener of the Task Group, for consideration as to whether any changes may be required.

The document on the assessment of certification body competence has been amended following the latest round of comments and has now been sent to the IAF TC Chairman for clearance for circulation to the full IAF membership for 60 day comment.

7.0 UKAS

7.1 UKAS Update

Trevor Nash reported on the presentation Jeff Ruddle had given to the Management Committee on UKAS customer service and some of the KPI's that UKAS is using including the timeframes for potential improvements to service quality. There had been an increase in complaints across UKAS following implementation of the new IT system however, the new system is not the main cause of these issues within the certification section.

The final batch of newly recruited Assessment Managers are nearing completion of training and three Assessment Managers have been trained as decision makers.

When asked whether Regulation EC 765 had any impact on UKAS resourcing, Lorraine Turner replied that there was little new work as a result of the Regulation and that UKAS was doing more subcontracting than working as a subcontractor to other accreditation bodies. Members reported that they had not experienced an increase in overseas visits being subcontracted to other IAF MLA signatories.

When asked whether the targets for forward booking of visits included notification of the team members, effort required and the assessment plan, Jeff Ruddle replied that the aim was to provide an outline plan three months in advance and the detailed plan one month in advance. Members reported that they were still experiencing late submission of visit plans, on occasions as late as the day before.

There will also be more effort put into improving the planning process and Jeff Ruddle had introduced a questionnaire aimed at getting information from certification bodies regarding the current position and any changes. Trevor Nash reported that it had been agreed some time ago that improving the UKAS assessment process was another area for a joint ABCB/UKAS working group. He had been in touch with UKAS in an attempt to progress this.

It had been raised that delays in extensions to scope were still a problem and Lorraine Turner replied that UKAS is aware of the commercial issues regarding extensions but it is important that UKAS manages routine visits as they would not want a repeat of the outcome from the last peer evaluation.

7.2 Non-accredited Certification

David Fenn reported on the first meeting of the joint working group on non-accredited certification which he chairs.

The meeting had agreed that the main issue was with SME's and the potential of them not being sufficiently aware of the differences between UKAS accredited and other forms of certification. There had been an exchange of correspondence with BIS regarding the legal position of CB's accredited by organisations other than UKAS in relation to Regulation 765. BIS agreed to issue their response on the BIS website

which has now been done. They also promote UKAS accredited certification using the wording of the MoU. David Fenn urged Members to make use of the statement on the BIS website to differentiate between UKAS and other accreditations.

UKAS commented that many CB websites make little or no reference to UKAS and accreditation. It was agreed that UKAS would make available what promotional literature it has and that CB's should be encouraged to use this in their own marketing material in order to get a consistent message across.

It was also recognised that another issue was that UKAS accredited certification bodies also issue some certificates, which are not accredited, in new areas of certification or whilst waiting for extensions to scope being processed. The non-accredited certification bodies use this to defend their position. The working group proposed that UKAS accredited certification bodies commit to comply with the appropriate accreditation standard in situations where they are having to issue unaccredited certificates.

David Fenn reported that he had met with FSB and CIPS. FSB has now agreed that it will only accept advertising from certification bodies if they are UKAS accredited. This includes refusing to accept advertising from non-accredited certification bodies even if they are FSB members. CIPS have agreed to publish a 'buyer beware' article by David Fenn in their journal. He now intends to meet with IoD and CBI

Following the meeting there had been some success in getting articles published in the ENDS Report and in The Environmentalist. It had been suggested that future articles should reference accreditation by IAF/EA MLA signatories rather than referring only to UKAS.

Trevor Nash reported that he had been in contact with the Trading Standards Institute who are keen to participate in future meetings.

The next meeting is scheduled for 31 January.

7.3 UKAS Technical Advisory Committees

UKAS are getting closer to finalising the membership of the Management Systems Technical Advisory Committee now and are aiming to get the invitation letters sent out by mid February. Certification body customer representation remains a problem.

It was considered that someone from a Member's impartiality committee could be suitable as they would have the necessary understanding of accreditation and certification. Emma McCarthy suggested that David Bell, the Chairman of the Ascertiva Group's management systems impartiality committee, would be a good candidate and agreed to ask if he would be interested. David Fenn

had also proposed a member of the British Assessment Bureau's impartiality committee whose organisation is certified by LRQA.

7.4 Members' Issues

Martin Gainey reported that NMO had its last UKAS visit in June 2010. In scheduling the next visit UKAS has proposed to use a sub-contract assessor who is also an NMO subcontract assessor. NMO had queried this with UKAS and been informed that, in this instance, an exception to the norm was acceptable. Members expressed concerns that this would compromise the integrity of the assessment. Norman Charters reported that Certification International had had a similar experience.

8.0 Any Other Business

Trevor Nash reminded Members about the seminar and lunch on 20 March.

9.0 **Date and Venue of Next Meeting**

The next Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 24 April 2012 at BSI, Milton Keynes.

Other Meetings in 2012 are scheduled for:

Tuesday 10 July 2012
Tuesday 11 September 2012