Association of British Certification Bodies

CONFIDENTIAL

**Minutes of the ABCB Management Committee Meeting
held on 8 November 2013 at AFNOR UK, The Base,
Dartford Business Park,Victoria Road, Dartford, DA1 5FS**

Members present:

Mr Mike Lawson	Intertek – Chairman
Mr Bernard Anderson	Eagle Certification
Ms Carolyn Harris	AFNOR UK
Mr Ian Knott	SIRA
Mr Andrew Launn	BSI
Mr Alan Wells	Ascertiva Group

In attendance:

Mr Trevor Nash	Chief Executive
Mr Rob Bettinson	UKAS
Mr Nigel Overton	UKAS

1.0 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence. The Chairman welcomed Rob Bettinson and Nigel Overton to the meeting.

2.0 Minutes of last meeting held on 10 July 2013

The minutes were agreed as a true record.

3.0 Matters arising not covered elsewhere in the agenda

3.1   Ex Minute 6.1   ISO 9001 revision

Andrew Launn provided an update on the revision of ISO 9001. There had been 569 comments on the latest draft, many concerned with exclusions. The UK position is to support the retention of exclusions and for them to apply to the whole standard, with the client having to justify any exclusions. There has also been discussion regarding Annex SL, which is not open for negotiation, and on terminology. The next stage is that a further draft will be circulated for comment and the forecast is for publication in late 2015.

PROMOTING ACCREDITED CERTIFICATION

1

Andrew Launn was concerned that the QS/1 meeting had been poorly attended and questioned whether this reflected a reduction of interest in ISO 9001. Rob Bettinson reported that UKAS had been absent from this and other important technical committees in the past, but was now providing representation and that Steve Randall would be attending QS/1 in the future.

Trevor Nash reported that at the IAF TC meeting, a transition period of three years from its publication was agreed for the revised ISO 9001. Certification bodies are encouraged to start working with their clients as early as possible. A Task Force to develop transition arrangements was established.

There is also the question of the transition for the revised ISO 14001 which is due to be published around the same time, but the IAF TC did not seem to be concerned that there may be inconsistency in transition arrangements.

ISO TC 207 SC 1 met in early October following which CD2 of the ISO 14001 revision has been circulated for comment. The programme is for the DIS to be published 1 July 2014, the FDIS March/April 2015, with publication of the revised standard May/June 2015.

3.2   Ex Minute 6.4   UKAS customer agreement

Rob Bettinson provided an update on progress with the revision of the UKAS customer agreement. The changes are primarily due to ISO/IEC 17011, the IAF and EA MLA's and Regulation EC 765. Due to their nature, the inclusion of these changes are not negotiable, although there may be room for flexibility in certain instances. Experience from a recent appeal also had a bearing on some of the proposed changes. Trevor Nash and representatives from BMTA and Safed are attending a meeting with UKAS on 29 November to discuss the draft agreement. Rob Bettinson agreed to provide a copy of the draft revised agreement so that it could be circulated to Members in advance of this meeting. Andrew Launn volunteered BSI's legal department to review the agreement.

Action: Trevor Nash/Andrew Launn

4.0   Meetings

4.1   EA Horizontal Harmonisation Committee   24/25 September 2013

EA HHC had conducted a survey of EA accreditation bodies regarding their approach to decisions for maintaining accreditation following a surveillance visit. Some maintain accreditation based on the assessors recommendation whilst others conduct an independent review of the recommendation to confirm continued accreditation. Rob Bettinson reported that with some accreditation bodies that do perform an independent review, it is not so much a technical review but an agreement of the assessor's recommendation. UKAS will oppose making an independent review mandatory as this will have resource implications for UKAS and hence cost implications for all of its customers. The HHC agreed to establish a Task Force Group to look at situations where an independent review and discussion may not be necessary: UKAS shall be involved in this.

*P*ROMOTING *A*CCREDITED *C*ERTIFICATION

2

Mike Lawson asked whether this had been raised during any peer evaluations of UKAS. Rob Bettinson replied that it had in previous evaluations and the matter had been passed to ILAC which had informally considered the UKAS approach to be acceptable. However, within EA there is a new Chairman of the HHC who is questioning this approach.

The package of revised documents on accreditation for notification have been circulated within the HHC for comment. These went out to Members earlier in the week and the deadline for comments to HHC is 6 January 2014.

A proposal for a new work item to form a Task Force Group to look at activities that national accreditation bodies have to assess during surveillance will be submitted to EAAB and the General Assembly. Jeff Ruddle from UKAS shall be involved in this.

There was a question from the Austrian accreditation body regarding differences between law and an EA document. HHC could not agree and the opinion was that a mechanism should be put in place to deal with situations where a national accreditation body raises questions of compliance with the law of EA documents. This is being referred to the EA Executive Committee.

4.2   EACC   2 October 2013

Trevor Nash reported that stakeholders had expressed concerns about the proliferation of sector schemes and it was concluded that as they are developed as a result of market need, there is little EA can do to regulate the number of schemes.

There was a presentation from ETSI about a draft ETSI standard for Trust Service Provider Conformity Assessment (TS 119 403). Kevin Belson from UKAS is leading on this for EA.

An Environmental WG proposal to review EA-7/04 to include regulatory compliance for all MS standards was not endorsed.

A second draft document on witnessing of certification body assessment is available. It is not trying to achieve a single procedure but looking to establish greater harmonisation.

Although ISO is developing an international standard for OHSAS, it was agreed to continue with the work on harmonising accreditation for OHSAS 18001.

4.3   UKAS AGM   8 October 2013

Mike Lawson reported that prior to the AGM there had been a strategic discussion on UKAS pricing. The UKAS Board considered that it was advantageous for UKAS to accelerate its five year plan and that one possible way of achieving this could be through increasing fees above the normal inflationary increases. UKAS had surveyed fees charged by other accreditation bodies and found that generally its fees were between 10%

PROMOTING **A**CCREDITED **C**ERTIFICATION   3

and 50% lower than others. There was support for acceleration of the five year plan but not through increased fees. Members pointed out that there are differing charging regimes amongst accreditation bodies and it is not always possible to compare like with like. The UKAS executive took an action to look at other options and report back to the Board.

Andrew Launn asked whether UKAS had looked at how certification bodies charge and Mike Lawson replied that Richard Hulmes of Safed had raised this at the meeting.

4.4   EFAC   8 October 2013

Trevor Nash reported that membership is still the main issue. Two new individual certification bodies (associate members) have joined this year and there are two others that have expressed an interest. However, there are two association members that have not paid the current year's subscription. One the Greek association also did not pay last year, but have indicated they will pay all their dues. The other is an Italian association and one of the other members is visiting them later this month.

This means that there is a limit to what EFAC can afford to fund and it was agreed that members who attend meetings as a representative of EFAC fund themselves.

It was agreed that an EFAC bank account will be opened in the UK by the end of the year in time for the 2014 subscriptions.

The remainder of the meeting was concerned with reviewing the EACC meeting and preparing for the IAF TC meeting.

Mike Lawson asked whether EFAC has a future. Trevor Nash replied that at the moment there are a small number of dedicated supporters of EFAC and while they remain involved it is likely to continue. However, EFAC's long term future will dependant on increasing membership and whether new incumbents have the same commitment as the current members.

4.5   IAF   16 - 25 October 2013

Trevor Nash reported that IAF income is slightly below budget, but this is more than matched by reduced expenditure. The 2014 budget is break even and the good financial performance means that the increase in subscriptions for 2014 will be 5.8% compared to the previously planned 11.7%.

There are two new regional group members of IAF; African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC) and Arab Accreditation Cooperation (ARAC). Individual accreditation bodies form Kazakhstan, Kenya and Sri Lanka have joined. There are two new association members; CEOC and QuEST.

ISO/IEC 27001:2013 (ISMS) was endorsed as a normative document with a two year transition period. All new accredited certificates shall be to the new standard one year after its publication.

PROMOTING ACCREDITED CERTIFICATION

4

The next revision of ISO/TS 22003 (FSMS) was endorsed as a normative document and the transition period will be 3 years from its publication.

The revision of ISO 14065 will go to ballot shortly and it was agreed that as there are no new requirements, a transition will not be necessary.

A new Task Force was established to look at a paper submitted by IIOC on anomalies between accreditation bodies. Another new Task Force has been established to look at control of certification bodies' franchisees and subcontractors.

A new Task Force on witnessed assessments met for the first time and is picking up the work started by the EACC.

At the request of KAN, the Indonesian accreditation body, it was agreed to establish a Task Force to develop an informative document on the duration of accreditation body assessments.

The Informative document on the transition for ISO/IEC 17065 is ready to go out for ballot.

4.6   EAAB   30 October 2013

The main issue was the revision of stakeholders' expectations of accreditation. All stakeholders expect accreditation to deliver transparency and confidence in the competence of the conformity assessment infrastructure. In particular conformity assessment bodies are seeking:

- a competent and effective accreditation service,
- global acceptance of accredited results and
- reasonable conditions without unnecessary burdens and costs for CAB's and their clients.

CAB's expect EA to:

- deliver a truly European wide accreditation without duplication of assessment in different countries,
- provide centres of excellence, in particular, to deliver sector scheme accreditation from no more that the necessary number of AB's and
- be active with CAB's in detecting and countering fraud.

4.7   UKAS PAC   7 November 2013

UKAS is looking to trial a staged approach to accreditation, to assist smaller organisations, initially in the diagnostic imaging sector.

It was reported that some foreign certification bodies are considering relocating their head office to the UK so that they can seek UKAS accreditation which is seen to be more of a global brand than their local accreditation.

PROMOTING **A**CCREDITED **C**ERTIFICATION

A document 'Standards and Accreditation – Tools for delivering better regulation' has been developed and circulated to Ministers and senior government officials.

A draft UKAS policy for dealing with vexatious complaints was reviewed and received the support of the PAC.

Paul Stennett gave a report of the UKAS Board meeting which took place on 5 November. There was a review of the strategic discussion on pricing which took place prior to the AGM. The aim is to make the pricing structure simpler, more advantageous to smaller organisations and to generate funds to accelerate the five year plan. It is proposed to reduce the annual accreditation fee by £150 so that laboratories would no longer have to pay this fee. This would result in a significant reduction in the number of low value invoices raised. It is also proposed to average out travel and subsistence costs so that all UKAS customers are charged a standard travel charge per day of on-site assessment (not for overseas visits), irrespective of location.

A review of projected growth and historic growth suggested a minimum of 5% annually up to 2020 but possibly as high as 9 – 10%. By 2020 the majority of UKAS work will be in the healthcare sector.

The current UKAS IT outsourcing contract ends at the end of November and is being switched to a new supplier which may result in some minor disruption over this period.

4.8   EA General Assembly   20/21 November 2013

Trevor Nash will be attending the meeting on behalf of EFAC. No papers for the meeting were available.

5.0   Chief Executive's report

5.1   Management accounts – October 2013

Trevor Nash circulated the October management accounts. There are still two basic subscriptions outstanding, which are being chased. Turnover figures are awaited from four members so they can be invoiced for their turnover related subscription. The total outstanding subscriptions are estimated at around £5250.

Expenditure is under control although meeting costs are ahead of budget mainly due to the hosting of an EFAC meeting in June and the registration fee for the recent IAF meeting. These costs are to a certain extent offset by reduced travel expenditure. Computer costs are also ahead of budget due to renewal of website domain registrations and the purchase of a new laptop.

The end of year position is expected to be on or around budget.

6.0   UKAS

6.1   UKAS customer service

PROMOTING **A**CCREDITED **C**ERTIFICATION

Rob Bettinson reported that the UKAS Quality manager, Brian Hough had retired at the end of October and that his replacement (Tracy Pia) would be starting in December.

UKAS is set to review its customer survey questionnaire as it has not changed for ten years. Jackie Burton will contact stakeholders for their input when this gets underway

Twenty three Assessment Managers will have gone through the new induction training programme since it was set up at the turn of the year.

A new Technical Bulletin on the process for extensions to scope has been issued and is available on the UKAS website.

A draft Technical Bulletin on witnessed assessments has been issued and was circulated to Members earlier in the week. Members were asked to forward their comments to Trevor Nash by 14 November.

Action: Members

UKAS is planning to introduce a pre-visit questionnaire to gather information which will allow for improved visit planning. A bulletin is being drafted and will be circulated to ABCB for comment prior to rolling this initiative out. This is partly being driven by new/proposed IAF mandatory requirements.

Following their confirmation as an EA MLA signatory UKAS was required to provide a progress report on reduction of overdue visits in August and this showed improvement in the situation. EA still has to look at UKAS accreditation of medical laboratories to complete the peer evaluation. This is programmed for March 2014 at which time there will be a further review of overdue visits. The extension of the EA MLA for greenhouse gas verification has been delayed as only a small number of accreditation bodies have been evaluated. The EA Executive informed the EA MAC that it did not have the authority to allow the MLA to be signed at its October meeting as only a proportion of accreditation bodies could sign it and there would be a two tier system. Therefore the EA General Assembly will decide whether to proceed or whether to wait a further year until majority of other accreditation bodies have been evaluated.

Nigel Overton reported that there are currently four Assessment Manager vacancies in the Certification Section. This has increased by one due to the resignation of an AM who is leaving in January 2014. The Project Manager that has been working in the Section has now moved onto the customer portal project.

6.2   ISO/IEC 17024:2012 transition

UKAS is progressing this transition and commenced assessments to ISO/IEC 17024:2012 in June.

6.3   ISO/IEC 17065:2012 transition

UKAS is progressing this transition and commenced assessments to ISO/IEC 17065:2012 in August. Mike Lawson reported that Intertek had recently been assessed by a regulator from a Middle Eastern country that had raised an issue that they were not yet accredited for ISO/IEC 17065:2012 and had been given six months in which to complete the transition. This regulator did not understand the internationally agreed transition arrangements.

6.4   ISO 27001:2013 transition

Letters outlining the transition arrangements have been circulated to certification bodies. Steve Watkins is preparing a gap analysis and developing training for UKAS Assessors.

6.5   Other UKAS matters

Bernard Anderson represents ABCB on the working group for the PAS 43 scheme for vehicle recovery and raised some concerns regarding the scheme. Bernard stated that the AA have expressed reservations about the scheme and are now performing their own inspections. They may consider withdrawing their support for the scheme, after the next revision, if their concerns are not addressed.

Bernard reported that he was aware of examples where his certification body had withdrawn certification due to non-compliance and the clients had been recertified by another certification body within weeks, without appearing to have made any changes to their operating procedures. He stated that at the last working group meeting Kevin Belson had raised the possibility of performing market surveillance visits to certified organisations. Both Nigel Overton and Rob Bettinson emphasised that UKAS could only do this if there were complaints logged through the UKAS complaints process, and upon such receipt UKAS would certainly look to take the matter forward. Bernard Anderson agreed to document his concerns and submit them with evidence to UKAS as complaints.

Action: Bernard Anderson

Ian Knott asked whether UKAS had assessors that can cover both ISO 9001 and ISO 14001. Nigel Overton replied that there are some assessors that can cover both standards, but not across all sectors. There may also be issues regarding the availability of these assessors.

Bernard Anderson asked for an update on the proposed MoD sector scheme. Rob Bettinson replied that the development of the scheme has been delayed and it is unlikely it will be launched before mid 2014 at the earliest.

7.0   Any other business

7.1   Global directory of organisations certified to ISO MS standards

The proposal for an ISO directory of certified organisations was circulated to members and there was overwhelming opposition from members to the

*P*ROMOTING *A*CCREDITED *C*ERTIFICATION

proposal. ABCB's comments were passed to BSI and incorporated into the UK response to the proposal. IIOC and IQNet are supporting the proposal. It is likely that the database will be restricted to providing a means to validate certificates rather than a fully searchable database of certified organisations. However, Nigel Croft, who is the Chair of ISO TC 176 SC2, has written to CASCO WG 21 supporting the concept of a fully searchable database.

The ISO Council has decided to pilot the directory with a selected management system standard such as ISO 50001 and will establish an ad-hoc stakeholder group to define and determine all risks and address outstanding issues raised by Council members.

7.2   Draft IAF Strategic Plan

Trevor Nash informed Members that ABCB has the opportunity to comment on the draft IAF Strategic Plan. Comments need to be submitted to IAF by 20 December and he asked Members to advise him of any comments they have,

Action: Members

7.3   Any Other Business

Andrew Launn requested that a new electronic version of the ABCB logo be made available as BSI now includes the logos of participating organisations on standards.

Action: Trevor Nash

8.0   Date and venue of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Friday 14 February 2014 at Intertek, 25 Savile Row, London, W1S 2ES.

Other meetings for 2014 were agreed as 9 May at BSI, Milton Keynes and 4 July (combined with the AGM) at the Ascertiva Group, Dunstable.

*P*ROMOTING *A*CCREDITED *C*ERTIFICATION