

**UNITED KINGDOM ACCREDITATION SERVICE
POLICY ADVISORY FORUM
Agreed Report of 2nd Meeting
Held on Tuesday 6th March 2012 at the BIS Conference Centre, London**

1- Welcome and Introductions

Lord Lindsay, UKAS Chairman, welcomed members to the second meeting of the UKAS Policy Advisory Forum. He welcomed the good attendance from a broad range of stakeholders, indicating that the creation of PAF had been a success.

He reported that the year had been a very busy one for UKAS with the installation of a new IT system, the launch of a number of large developments projects for new accreditation schemes and, at the same time, maintaining the volume of existing work. The feedback received from last year's PAF had helped UKAS to maintain the right balance between these competing pressures. The input from PAF was also extremely valuable in helping UKAS formulate its response to the increasing demands from Government for UKAS accreditation as an alternative to regulation. UKAS had become increasingly involved with this agenda over the past year, particularly in collaboration with the Cabinet Office and the Better Regulation Executive.

The newly formed Policy Advisory Council had also been very successful in facilitating a real stakeholder contribution to the running of the company. Lord Lindsay thanked Dr Jones for his able chairmanship of the PAC and to all the members who had attended the meetings and provided valuable stakeholder insight.

He assured members of his determination that UKAS, as the national accreditation body, would continue to operate in the public interest and emphasised the value he placed on PAF in helping to define what the public interest really means as UKAS moves forward into the next key business cycle. He invited members to contribute fully in the discussion groups later in the meeting to provide UKAS with input to the development of the strategic plan for the next three years, 2013 to 2016.

2- Report of the 1st Meeting of the UKAS PAF

PAF/06/11

Dr Jones, PAF Chairman, welcomed members to PAF. He particularly welcomed those attending for first time and especially Sarah Veale representing TUC, which had been added as a new nominating body since the last meeting. He drew attention to UKAS' role as national accreditation body and importance of stakeholder input.

[Secretary's note: A list of attendees and apologies is attached at Annex A.]

Dr Jones reported that the PAC had met twice since the last PAF. He thought that these meetings had been successful and the representative structure had worked well. He noted that the place available for a representative of clinical direct customers was still open but reported that discussions had continued around the establishment of a Clinical Advisory Committee and it was hoped that this would be resolved soon.

Dr Jones also reported that the feedback provided at the 1st PAF meeting on responding to the increasing demands from Government for UKAS accreditation had been extremely useful in setting up a more detailed discussion at the July meeting of the PAC. This in turn informed the UKAS response to the BIS consultation exercise on Transforming Regulatory Enforcement. As a result UKAS was well placed to be involved in the follow up work proposed to encourage greater use of co-regulation and earned recognition by enforcement agencies.

Dr Jones advised that the report of the 1st PAF meeting was agreed at the PAC meeting in July. There were no questions raised.

3- Report from 1st and 2nd Meetings of the UKAS PAC and confirmation of arrangements for future meetings PAC/10/11 PAC/17/11

Dr Jones reported on the main issues discussed at the 1st and 2nd PAC meetings:

- A number of discussions on the impact of non-accredited certification. An ABCB working group was taking this further;
- Some preliminary work on the economic benefits of accreditation, to be discussed under Item 6;
- Feedback from UKAS Board meetings had been helpful as had reviews of the international programme;
- Consideration of an agreement between UKAS and the TickIT scheme to ensure that it did not represent any threat to UKAS impartiality;
- Discussion on an e-learning package being prepared by BIS to help educate Government officials on the use of standards, conformity assessment and accreditation;
- BIS monitoring of UKAS, to be discussed under Item 5;
- Preparation for the development of the next UKAS 3 year strategy, to be discussed under Item 7.

The Chairman commented on the good use of deputies in PAC to provide a variety of views. Technical Advisory Groups were also proving effective advice to UKAS and were being developed further in the medical area.

Mr Gainsford commented on the positive momentum of PAF and PAC in embracing stakeholders. He asked if any members had left the group and if there were any plans to expand membership to include new areas of activity.

Mr Hynd, PAF Secretary, advised that a number of representatives had changed since last year and two positions were currently vacant. He said that no nominating parties had left but that a number were under threat of reorganisation which might have an impact on PAF membership in the near future. He confirmed that the membership was under continuous review particularly to ensure that new areas of business were properly represented.

4- Review of 2011/12 and priorities for 2012/13

Mr Stennett, UKAS Chief Executive, presented a review of 2011/12 and priorities for 2012/13.

[Secretary's note: a copy of Mr Stennett's presentation circulated with this report.]

Mr Stennett reported that the growth of demand for accreditation, unprecedented demand for new accreditation schemes, increased Government interest in accreditation and the launch of the new ERP system (Darwin) had combined to make 2011/2012 one of the most challenging years for UKAS.

He said that Darwin was aimed at improving efficiency and dealing with customer growth and expansion without significantly increasing overhead costs. It would also provide a sound foundation for improved management control and rigour. He reported that it had been implemented on time in May and all staff had undertaken extensive training but it had still taken some time for benefits to be realised. Customer service, as shown in the customer surveys, initially suffered but was now recovering.

He reported that UKAS headcount had increased by twenty during the year but recruitment had

not been easy despite the economic climate. Lead times for recruitment seemed to be extending. Government interest was more apparent through initiatives schemes such as: Transforming Regulatory Enforcement and Open Public Services. He welcomed the addition of the Department of Health as a new UKAS Member.

Mr Stennett reported on the many new development activities which included: Crime scene investigation; Nuclear new build; Green Deal; Physiological diagnostics; and Competent Persons Schemes under the Building Regulations.

Priorities for the coming year included: delivering external and internal service excellence; stabilising the certification section; improved monitoring of financial performance; enhanced communication and awareness of accreditation; targeted growth of UKAS business; and developing UKAS people to manage the business better.

Mr Stennett expressed his gratitude to Mr Mortimer for ensuring that BIS funding has continued, albeit at a reduced level, reflecting pressures on Government budgets.

Mr Holmes welcomed the openness of Mr Stennett's presentation and asked how soon the benefits of Darwin would come through and whether he expected the growth of new schemes to continue on a similar trend?

Mr Stennett commented that Darwin should be used for improving visit bookings and management but these benefits were not yet being realised. Planning for new accreditation schemes was more difficult to predict as it was outside UKAS' control.

Dr Llewellyn asked if recruitment problems were also impacting on assessor staff, particularly for new business. Mr Stennett said that finding assessors with the right skills mix was difficult.

5- BIS monitoring of UKAS – John Mortimer, BIS

Mr Mortimer presented information on BIS monitoring of UKAS.

[Secretary's note: a copy of Mr Mortimer's presentation circulated with this report.]

Mr Mortimer explained that his presentation was in response to a request from PAC for more information on how BIS monitored UKAS. He described the BIS/UKAS relationship as symbiotic and therefore a level of privacy was required. However, BIS monitoring was based on the requirements placed on national accreditation bodies by EU Regulation 765/2008 and, for the technical aspects, BIS relied heavily on the EA peer evaluation process. BIS was therefore pleased that UKAS had successfully passed the peer evaluation last year.

Mr Mortimer explained that the BIS/UKAS MoU also placed a number of requirements on UKAS to provide certain information to BIS such as the annual business plan, an overview of complaints to enable BIS to plot general trends and advance notice of changes in fees. BIS was also able to ask for any other reasonable information.

The main monitoring activity was delivered through formal meetings with the CEO every two months. A variety of issues was discussed such as Ministerial involvement, the business plan, the awareness campaign, customer satisfaction data, non-accredited certification and other more specific issues. There were also three monthly meetings with the Director of External Affairs mainly to ensure that BIS was aware of developments at the international level.

There was also a great deal of contact with UKAS at the informal level to deal with issues as they arose, such as the Notified Body programme, UKAS input to the Green Deal, the e-learning package, funding for the awareness programme; the economic impact of accreditation study; and the establishment of the Government college for PAC. Mr Mortimer said he would welcome contact from other Government representatives to take part in this co-ordination work.

Mr Nash welcomed the information from BIS and asked for confirmation that BIS was generally

content with UKAS' performance against the Regulation and MoU. Mr Mortimer confirmed that it was.

6- Economic Benefits of Accreditation Study

PAF/02/12

Dr Lambert presented information on a research study into the economic benefits of accreditation.

[Secretary's note: a copy of Dr Lambert's presentation circulated with this report.]

Dr Lambert explained that work had already taken place on the economic impact of the innovation infrastructure, which included accreditation. This work had identified a link between accredited certification to ISO 9001 and productivity but had also led to a realisation that there was not a great deal of economic information about accreditation. This work would be published on the BIS website shortly.

Dr Lambert said that the new study would focus on the impact of accreditation and he would be looking for more statistical data and case studies. He was hoping that members of PAF would be able to provide information and invited those with interest in contributing to contact him direct.

Mr Formstone asked whether the impact on end customers, eg patients, would be covered. Dr Lambert confirmed that he would be happy to cover this if information was available. He was already factoring in some information from ISAS and CPA but would welcome further discussion.

[Secretary's note: Members interested in contributing to this work should contact Dr Lambert at r.lambert@bbk.ac.uk.]

7- Developing the next UKAS 3 year strategy 2013-2016 – Table discussions and feedback

PAF/03/12

Mr Stennett introduced the strategic planning process within UKAS stressing that input from stakeholders was very important. He wanted to use the meeting to build on the PESTTEL and SWOT analyses started at the last meeting of the PAC. He invited members, in their table groupings, to highlight what they regard as the single most important Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to UKAS as identified in the PAC analysis and then to discuss one or more of the questions provided.

Following discussion, the table rapporteurs reported as follows:

Table 1

Question 2: How can UKAS help Government to respond to the demand for greater accountability and openness eg where are the growth opportunities for accreditation?

Opportunities for UKAS in any sector where existing public services will be open to competition (laboratory testing, care home provision, private medical care) to look at:

- Infrastructure
- Facilities
- Competence of persons
- Quality of service
 - ⇒ e.g Diagnostic imaging scheme

UKAS involvement would:

- allow increased number of providers
- allow quality of information provided to be more consistent
- ensure harmonised outputs
- provide potential economic benefit (but vital to ensure quality maintained)
 - ⇒ e.g animal health laboratory testing

Risks

- UKAS could be seen as a free market collaborator
- UKAS capacity could be exceeded
- Too much competition - may be difficult to maintain consistency
- Conflict with other organisations eg Care Quality Commission

Table 2***Question 2: How can UKAS help Government to respond to the demand for greater accountability and openness eg where are the growth opportunities for accreditation?***

Opportunities in change in public sector provision eg the Open Public Services White Paper

- NHS commissioning
- Police forensics
 - ⇒ private sector
 - ⇒ In-house, not always accredited
- Public analysts e.g. food: system evaporating
- Regulatory enforcement, reliant on trust
- Red tape challenge

How do you get consensus in the benchmark? Standards might be the answer but policy moving faster. Risk of UKAS being expected to develop schemes to accredit conformity assessment against standards that don't exist yet. Need to be prepared to say no when really necessary.

Question 5: How can UKAS respond more quickly to changes and opportunity but still maintain integrity?

Accreditation vs political timescales. Information needed for benefit of Ministers and Better Regulation Teams eg e-learning package for civil servants.

Write up UKAS processes in response to new request with explanation of interim possibilities. Explain what can be done in 12-18 months.

Could this approach lead to "accreditation light" in the interim? Maybe but more defensible when it is explicitly a stepping stone to doing it "properly".

But need to beware of 'accreditation light' undermining UKAS' reputation.

Not calling it "accreditation" might help. But need to explain to the public what level of trust they should then put in it.

Engagement with the media might help.

Table 3

Strength

UKAS brand/concept

Weakness

Lack of knowledge of UKAS and accreditation in business and government

Opportunity

Deregulation and desire for alternatives to regulation

Threat

Failure to maintain service levels, particularly for certification

Table 4

Strength

Reputation for quality backed by Regulation 765/08

Weakness

Lack of awareness of benefits of accreditation and perceived costs

Opportunity

Need for assurance of interoperability and compatibility

Threat

Increased expectation without increased resource. Government is driving expectation that UKAS can provide solutions but if resource is not provided cannot deliver

Question 7 – What are the most important priorities if Government support to UKAS is reduced?

- Expansion of schemes in public sector
- Hard evidence on costs and benefits
- More aggressive marketing
- Can UKAS reasonably generate more revenue to cover generic costs
- Preserve “joint” accreditation awareness campaign

Table 5

Question 6: How can UKAS make more of an impact in the health sector?

Focus on standards in residential & domiciliary care

Opportunities

- Bring quality management into health
- Lead EU standards
- UKAS to certify independent inspection/accredited bodies (currently, under CQC inspection, once every three years)
- Investing for all our futures

Threats

- Public opinion
- Press “sound bites” driving perception that care is poor

Strengths

- UKAS has potential to have huge impact!

Local authorities fund 70% of care home placements. They have a requirement to obtain value for money for services. At present, no way of checking value exists, so they may be using lowest cost which affects us all. Need to have informed decision making to drive up quality and to increase pride in the sector.

Table 6

Question 5: How can accreditation respond more quickly to changes and opportunity but still maintain integrity?

The investment in new IT could enable UKAS to be more “fleet of foot”.

Communication/meetings could be more engaging, frequent using IT e.g. by using “Huddle”

Is there evidence that UKAS is not responding fast enough? What areas – seek views from within and without?

Points for consideration:

- How can quality outcomes from “service delivery” functions such as healthcare be measured?
- How can UKAS prioritise the most important things that need to be responded to or are highest priority to the business/economy?
- How can businesses have certainty that the standards they use are acceptable internationally?

Table 7

Question 5: *How can accreditation respond more quickly to changes and opportunity but still maintain integrity?*

Threats

Level of accreditation often governed by the quality of the standard.

Availability of competent assessors.

Govt could become impatient with UKAS and develop own schemes instead.

Need more resource for the development activity.

Opportunities

Training of new assessors - explore whether wider industry can develop the assessors required perhaps by developing formal qualification or apprenticeship scheme.

Need good forward look on Government plans.

Strengths

Status of accreditation under Reg 765. UKAS strong brand.

Weaknesses

Costs of accreditation.

Levels of awareness including general public.

8- Confirmation of Next Meetings

The Chairman confirmed the arrangements for the next meetings as follows:

The third meeting of the PAC was confirmed for Thursday 5 July 2012 at the Lansdowne Club, London.

The fourth meeting of the PAC was confirmed for Thursday 8 November 2012 at UKAS, Feltham.

The third meeting of the PAF was confirmed for Tuesday 5 March 2013 at the BIS Conference centre.

9- Closing remarks

Mr Hynd drew members' attention to an article in the most recent edition of the UKAS Update magazine reporting on the results of the IAF survey into the value of accreditation, which had been discussed at a Policy Advisory Committee meeting in 2010. Further detail would be available later in the year and would be circulated to PAF members.

The Chairman thanked all members for attending the meeting and for the constructive input received.

UKAS Policy Advisory Forum – Nominating parties and Representatives

2nd Meeting – 6 March 2012

Constituency *	Nominating parties	Representatives
4	Academy of Medical Royal Colleges	Prof Adrian Newland
2	ADS Group	Sarah Barnard (apologies) Phil Curnock
1	Association for Clinical Biochemistry	Dr Julian Barth (apologies) Dr Michael Thomas (apologies)
1	Association of Clinical Pathologists	Dr William Fuggle
1	Association of British Certification Bodies	Trevor Nash Rob Wallis (apologies)
1	Association of Forensic Science Providers	Ric Treble (apologies)
1	Association of Independent Research and Technology Organisations	Graham Beddoe Graham Oliver (apologies)
2	British Electrotechnical & Allied Manufacturers' Association	Anne Humberstone (apologies)
1	British Measurement & Testing Association	Dr Jeff Llewellyn Tony Smith
2	British Retail Consortium	David Brackston (apologies)
4	British Standards Institution	Daniel Mansfield Ian Greensmith
4	Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply	Colin Maund (apologies)
4	Chartered Quality Institute	Catherine Bithell (apologies) Peter Lomas
2	Chemical Industries Association	John Roche (apologies)
2	Confederation of British Industry	Dr Martin Jones (Chair)
2	Construction Industry Council	David Lush (apologies)
4	Consumer Focus	Adam Scorer
3	Department for Business, Innovation & Skills – Innovation Infrastructure	Mark Holmes

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		John Mortimer
3	Department for Business, Innovation & Skills – Product Regulation	Richard Lawson
3	Department for Communities and Local Government	Anthea Nicholson (apologies) Guy Bampton (apologies)
3	Department for Energy and Climate Change	David Purdy (apologies) Rob Davis (apologies)
3	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs	Sackey Bennin Lesley Larkin
3	Department of Health (and devolved administrations)	Stephen Mitchell
2	Engineering Equipment and Materials Users Association	Clive Tayler (apologies)
2	English Community Care Association	Sue Brand (deputy: Colin White)
3	Environment Agency	Neil Davies (deputy: Stefan Robinson)
1	Federation of Certification Bodies	Bill Slocombe James Gibb
2	Federation of Small Businesses	Mike Pearson Sara Higham (apologies)
3	Food Standards Agency	Derrick Jones (deputy: Bhavna Parmar)
3	Forensic Science Regulator	Andrew Rennison (apologies)
1	Gauge and Toolmakers Association	Julia Moore (apologies) John Adams (apologies)
3	Health and Safety Executive	Jane Willis (deputy: Chris Rowe) Clive Fleming (apologies)
3	Health Protection Agency	Prof Ian Sharp (deputy: Christine Burgess)
2	Independent Healthcare Advisory Services	Andrew Wilby
1	Independent International Organisation for Certification	Roger Bennett Marcus Long

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4	Independent Patient Representative	Neil Formstone
1	Institute of Biomedical Science	Dr Jane Needham (apologies) Dan Smith (apologies)
2	Institute of Directors	Alexander Ehmann
3	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment	Martin Baxter (apologies)
4	Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining	Dr Graham Woodrow (apologies)
4	Institute of Measurement and Control	Peter Martindale (apologies)
2	Intellect	Mark Hattersley (apologies)
3	Intellectual Property Office	Guy Robinson (apologies)
4	Local Government Regulation	Vacant
3	Ministry of Defence (Defence Equipment and Support)	Kevin Thomas Chris Elliott
3	National Measurement Office	Peter Mason (apologies) Robert Gunn
4	National Physical Laboratory	Ian Severn (apologies)
3	National Policing Improvement Agency	Paul Hunter (apologies)
1	Royal College of Pathologists	Dr Archie Prentice (apologies)
1	Royal College of Radiologists	Andrew Hall (apologies) Dr Conall Garvey (apologies)
1	Safety Assessment Federation	Richard Hulmes (apologies)
4	Science Council	Dr Diana Garnham (deputy: Ali Orr)
1	Society & College of Radiographers	Richard Evans Prof Audrey Paterson (apologies)
2	Society of Maritime Industries	John Southerden
2	Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders	Vacant
3	Technology Strategy Board	Dr David Evans

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2	Trade Association Forum	Linda Cavender (apologies)
4	Trades Union Congress	Sarah Veale
4	Trading Standards Institute	Ron Gainsford Andy Foster (apologies)
1	United Kingdom Organic Certifiers Group	Tim Bailey Julian Wade
	UKAS members	
	Chief Executive	Paul Stennett
	External Affairs Manager/PAF Secretary	Malcolm Hynd
	UKAS attendees	
	Chairman	Lord Lindsay
	External Affairs and Technical Director	Graham Talbot
	Operations Director	Jane Beaumont
	Divisional Director Operations	Jeff Ruddle
	Marketing Manager	Jon Murthy
	PA to Chief Executive	Natacha Barbosa
	Other attendees	
	Birkbeck University of London	Dr Ray Lambert

***Key to constituencies**

- 1 – Direct customers
- 2 – Indirect customers
- 3 – Government
- 4 – Consumers, end users and other member