

UNITED KINGDOM ACCREDITATION SERVICE

POLICY ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Minutes of 28th Meeting held on Tuesday 8th September
This meeting was held remotely**

Present

Ron Gainsford (Chair)	Chartered Trading Standards Institute
Carol Stewart (CS)	British Measurement & Testing Association
Daniel Mansfield (DM)	British Standards Institution
Vince Desmond (VD)	Chartered Quality Institute
Sue Brand (SB)	Care England
Sarah Veale (SV)	Non-Executive Director, UKAS
Anna Garrido (AG)	Public Health England
Richard Sanders (RS)	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Will Creswell (WC)	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Dr Stefan Kukula (SK)	Engineering Equipment & Materials Users' Association
Keith Hayhurst (KH)	Ministry of Defence
Andy Evans (AE)	Gambica
Wayne Terry (WT)	Association of British Certification Bodies

Matt Gantley (MG)	UKAS
Lorraine Turner (LT)	UKAS
Hugh Taylor (HT)	UKAS
Suzi Daley (SD Sec.)	UKAS

1- Welcome, Apologies

The Chair welcomed members to the 28th meeting of the UKAS PAC acknowledging that this was **AG** and **VD's** first PAC. He also welcomed Keith Hayhurst who was deputising for Dave Thomas for the Ministry of Defence who sent his apologies. Apologies were also received from Ian O' Donnell for the Federation of Small Businesses and from Chris Rowe from the Health and Safety Executive.

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any potential conflict of interest in line with the revised PAC Terms of Reference. None were declared.

2- Minutes of the 27th Meeting of the Policy Advisory Council

PAC/10/20

No comments had been received on the draft minutes circulated in advance of the meeting and all the actions from the last meeting had been completed. Regarding Action 3 as the BSI PPE standards/Safer return to work guidance have now been revised, **DM** informed the PAC that the deadline for free access to selected standards had been extended. **DM** will send revised links to **SD** for circulation with these minutes [**since done**].

There were no other comments on the draft minutes which were then formally agreed.

3- Matters Arising

3.1. Non-accredited certification

As a new member **VD** asked for an update on the current situation so **HT** outlined recent discussions and engagement with the UKAS Primary Authority, Surrey County Council, stressing how supportive and proactive they have been in targeting and publicising issues such as counterfeit PPE certificates and more generally organisations purporting to offer 'accreditation' or 'accredited' certification.

KH outlined some of the issues MOD procurement was still having in relation to PPE as reported by Dave Thomas at the last PAC. He added that they had had useful support from the IP Crime Group and Action Fraud and

suggested that it would be worth UKAS approaching both organisations. **The Chair** added that UKAS should also approach National Trading Standards¹ as our Primary Authority would be represented on that body and could use it as a forum to escalate the issue of non-accredited certification to the national level.

The Chair thanked **HT** and others for their contributions and asked **HT** to consider following up on the suggestions made and to think about further information that could be shared with SCC.

[Action: HT to approach IP Crime Group, Action Fraud and NTS to support and publicise this work programme].

4- Members' Issues

There were no Members issues raised.

5- UKAS issues

5.1 Review of 10th Policy Advisory Forum

MG thought that from UKAS' perspective the event went very well and noted that contrary to stifling contributions the remote format maximised the opportunities for everyone to comment, He thought the workshops worked well and also noted that September is the optimum time to hold our key stakeholder event because of where it falls in the financial and strategic planning year. **The Chair** agreed adding that the presentations were very good and had elicited some excellent responses and then invited further views particularly from the new PAC Members who had also just attended their first PAF (**VD** and **AG**). PAC members were unanimously positive about the event and agreed that this year's format was a marked improvement on previous events particularly the introduction of breakout groups. **KH** flagged that remote events like this opened up the opportunity for UKAS to hold similar but smaller events more than once a year for example when seeking quick feedback/input to specific issues as they arise. This point was taken away for consideration by UKAS.

AG also found the event useful citing lots of constructive discussions but also flagged that as her personal scope only partly covers the remit of PHE it will be important that both PHE representatives attend future events (each PAF member organisation can nominate two representatives to attend PAF meetings).

5.2 Brexit: ongoing discussions with Govt departments

As this issue had been comprehensively covered at the PAF no further detailed discussion was deemed necessary. However the following points were made:

- Currently very good engagement with key Government Departments (BEIS/DIT) which are actively reaching out to UKAS for input at early and key stages of negotiations and policy developments impacting on our remit. [**WC** reiterated this adding that Government was committed to retaining our status as the NAB];
- UKAS is closely monitoring the impact of the new post-Brexit UK market requirements including the use of the UKCA/CE mark on the conformity assessment body market. Particularly looking at the impact of CABs relocating to EU countries (although there is no significant evidence of that happening yet).
- The Notified/Approved Body transition process needs to be accompanied by an effective communications strategy. UKAS also needs to work with regulatory bodies;
- We need to be mindful of the impact on SMEs which have limited resources for compliance so it may be an uphill struggle for many to process the administration involved with securing the UKCA mark. The importance of MRAs cannot be underestimated;
- UKAS needs to weigh up the effort and resource it dedicates to its relationship with EA against further developing its relationships with ILAC/IAF;
- UKAS' priority is to ensure that its role as NAB and how we support the national interest is understood and to ensure that message lands within Government; indications are that it has;
- Our stakeholders can support us by continuing to promote the value and importance of accredited conformity assessment to support regulation, trade and Government policy.

¹ <https://www.nationaltradingstandards.uk/>

5.3 Risk Register

LT presented the high level risk register outlining the key risks which had also been discussed to some extent under earlier agenda items:

1. The impact of the pandemic

WT highlighted that there is work underway looking at the effectiveness of remote audits, taking into account the current situation and this will be useful in shaping future practice of CBs and IBs.

2. Competition from overseas accreditation bodies trying to make inroads into the UK market, coupled with challenges from UK based bodies purporting to offer an 'accreditation' service . She added that UKAS had recently escalated an issue with one specific overseas accreditation body to ILAC.

3. The need for further clarification of the respective roles and remits of Trustmark and UKAS within the Government's Each Home Counts and Green Homes Grants scheme.

WC confirmed that following **MG's** letter raising UKAS' concerns about the continued misuse of the word accreditation, OPSS is in constructive dialogue with BEIS colleagues leading on Energy/Green Homes policy which has resulted in a better understanding of accreditation policy across BEIS. He is therefore confident of a more joined up approach to this issue going forward . A follow up meeting is planned between OPSS, Green Home policy officials and UKAS within the next couple of weeks.

6- Reports

6.1 Board Report

MG then went through the key issues discussed at the last Board meeting:

- PAC representation at future Board meetings. As part of the Board effectiveness work it has been decided that the PAC Chair should attend one Board meeting annually to report on PAC activities. The Chair will therefore attend the November Board meeting.
- Financial Report – The 2019/20 accounts were signed off by the Audit Committee. In order to protect the UKAS name, the Audit Committee agreed to change the name of Clinical Pathology Accreditation (CPL Ltd) to UKAS Ltd.
- Health and Safety – There is an ongoing H&S programme in place to provide a Covid secure workplace including regular risk assessments for vulnerable staff and a phased return to the office for office based staff.
- Risk Register
- Balanced Score Card
- EA Peer Evaluation– This has been postponed from November to May 2021 due to the pandemic
- BEIS Funding for the International Programme
- Investment Strategy
- Future of Assessments- the financial impact of remote assessments will be discussed at the November Board meeting
- Pricing -. The pricing policy for next year will need to reflect increased costs of travel
- Branding and symbols- UKAS will write to PAC members to get their feedback on the design of the accreditation symbols and the proposed implementation time of two years for customers [**Since done**].
- Diversity, Inclusion and Mobility Review UKAS will be conducting an organisational review focusing on Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act² . The review will be taken forward by the UKAS Finance Director and Head of HR, Georgia Alsop and Kanchan Agarwal respectively with support and coordination from **SV** who heavily endorsed the value and importance of this work.

On the issue of pricing, **KH** asked if next year's pricing structure would be based on physical or remote assessments or a blend of both. The day rate for next year is still under consideration. **WT** and **CS** also flagged the importance of considering the impact of price increases on ABCB and BMTA Members . Both

² <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

organisations will be conducting research on their members own price increases and will report back to PAC.

[Action: WT and CS].

6.2 International Programme activity report 2020 Q1: April-June

PAC/12/20

As a new Member **VD** sought clarification that the reports were sent for information. **The Chair** confirmed this, adding that they are circulated to give PAC a broad flavour of the range and diversity of UKAS' international activities. **RS** noted that as partial funders of the international programme, BEIS would find the reports more useful if they could focus more on outcomes. This point was acknowledged and will be taken on board in future reports.

Prior to the meeting **SK** had asked about the impact of Covid on ways of working between international bodies i.e moving from physical to remote working and whether this represented a longer term or permanent shift toward remote meetings. At this moment in time, the policies being circulated by all these bodies is relatively short-term and fluid. However, longer term UKAS anticipates a return to some form of physical meeting not least because there are important aspects of effective stakeholder engagement that can only be achieved face-to-face but as platforms such as Microsoft Teams are being used more and more effectively during this period it is likely remote working will become more the norm.

6.3 Operations Activity Report Q1- March-June

PAC/13/20

There were no comments on this report.

6.4 Development Activity Report

PAC/14/20

There were no comments on this report.

7- AOB

WT updated PAC on the IAF's task force looking at the global issue of counterfeit ISO13485 *Medical Devices Quality Management Systems - Requirements for Regulatory Purposes* mandatory (as discussed and minuted at the 27th PAC meeting in June) . IAF has now released three videos on how to recognise fake certificates and these are available on YouTube.

[Action: WT to circulate the links].

8- Next Meetings

The Chair confirmed the dates of the next meetings. Whether they will be held physically or remotely will be contingent on the Covid 19 situation at the time.

PAC: 2 Feb 2021- (venue TBC).

PAC: 18 May 2021- (UKAS, Staines)

PAC/PAF: September 2021- Date and venue TBC

ACTIONS

Number	Date raised	Topic	Action	Owner	update
1	8/9/20	Non -Accredited Certification	To approach IP Crime Group, Action Fraud and NTS for support	HT	
2	8/9/20	New accreditation symbols	UKAS to circulate new accreditation symbols to PAC for comment	SD	Symbols circulated on 9/9 for comments by 25/9
3	8/9/20	2021 Pricing structure	Canvassing ABCB/BMTA for views on UKAS 2021 pricing structure	WT/CS	
4	8/9/20	Fake ISO 13485 certificates	WT to circulate links to IAF YouTube videos on spotting fake certificates	WT	