

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL EUROLAB MEMBERS



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European Federation of National Associations of
Measurement, Testing and Analytical Laboratories

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

Our newsletter is intended as a platform for an exchange of information for all EUROLAB members. It aims at providing news on developments within the European laboratory community, their interaction with partner organisations (and other so-called "stakeholders"), on recent activities of EUROLAB as well as on relevant technical and political documents. We would like to invite you, especially the national secretariats, to contribute any useful information important for all of us.

ADDRESS BY BENT LARSEN, NEW ACTING EUROLAB PRESIDENT

Dear EUROLAB members,

Looking back on the outgoing year 2005, EUROLAB has again proven to successfully represent the interests of the European laboratory community as the European federation of national associations of measurement, testing and analytical laboratories.

One of the highlights in 2005 certainly was the workshop on "Regulation and standard requirements for conformity assessment of products, services and processes", held on 20th October 2005 in Paris. The review of the New Approach has been an important political topic for many activities of EUROLAB this year. In addition to the just mentioned workshop there have been a number of comments on the respective documents by our joint committee with CEOC on Product Testing and Certification (JTC PTC), several meetings with Mr. McMillan from the European Commission and finally a presentation by the EUROLAB president Marc Mortureux on the third parties' view during the Conference on the 20th Anniversary of the New Approach organised by the European Commission.

During our General Assembly in Bilbao in March 2005 we thoroughly discussed the work of EUROLAB's Technical working groups. I feel it is an important task that the Technical Committee for Quality Assurance (TCQA) is developing papers for the support of the individual EUROLAB member laboratories. In 2005 contacts and cooperation with partner organisations were enhanced not only on the European level but also internationally.

The year 2005 has also brought some personal changes. As Marc Mortureux was appointed new director of the French Pasteur Institute from December 2005, he had to leave LNE and thus had to resign as EUROLAB president.

On behalf of EUROLAB we would like to thank Marc Mortureux for his contributions, dedicated support and personal input to EUROLAB.

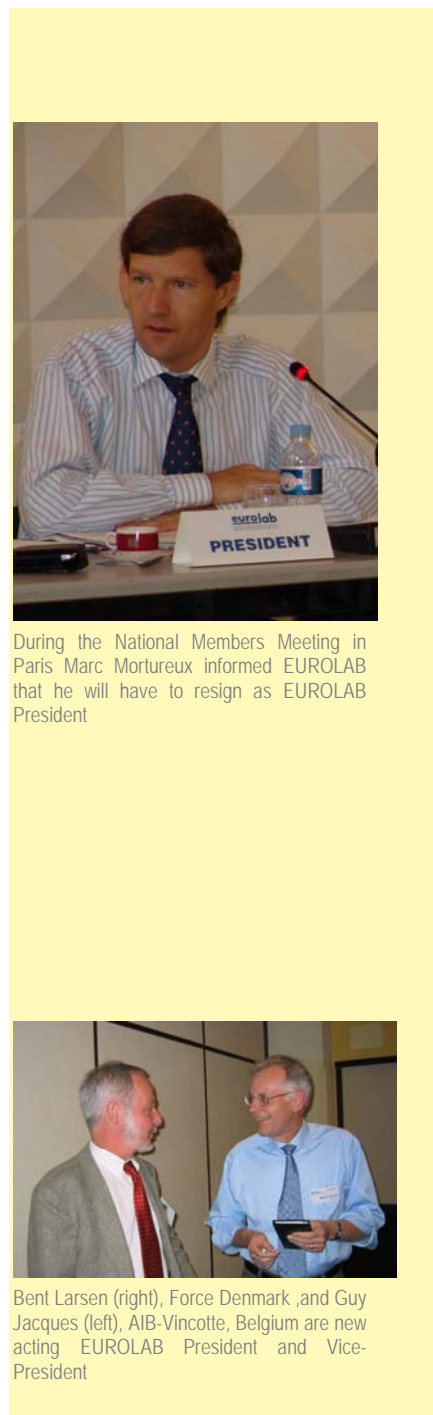
I wish EUROLAB and all its members all the best for the future, a peaceful Christmas time and a Happy New Year 2006.

Bent Larsen

NEW EUROLAB ACTING PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT

The EUROLAB Board of Administrators (BoA) met on 8 December and agreed that after the resigning of Marc Mortureux as EUROLAB President, Bent Larsen, until now Vice-President, will take over the tasks as acting EUROLAB President until the next elections taking place at the coming EUROLAB General Assembly on 16 May 2006. In the same way it was agreed that Guy Jacques will become the acting Vice-President for the interim time. Thanks to this solution and the readiness of Bent Larsen and Guy Jacques to take over the additional tasks EUROLAB will remain stable until the next elections.

Even though the presidency of EUROLAB will not remain at LNE, the Technical Secretariat will still be shifted to LNE with Jean-Marc Aublant as new secretary from January 2006.



During the National Members Meeting in Paris Marc Mortureux informed EUROLAB that he will have to resign as EUROLAB President



Bent Larsen (right), Force Denmark, and Guy Jacques (left), AIB-Vincotte, Belgium are new acting EUROLAB President and Vice-President

Workshop “Regulation and standard requirements for conformity assessment of products, services and processes”, 20th October 2005 Paris

Under the title “Regulation and standard requirements for conformity assessment of products, services and processes”, a joint EUROLAB, EA and Eurachem workshop was organised by EUROLAB-France, which was attended by 230 participants. The two major topics were:

- Revision of the New Approach and CE marking and
- Conformity Assessment and international trade.

Jacques McMillan from the European Commission, reported on the status of the revision of the New Approach. He stressed the importance of an improved and harmonised notification process. Preferably accreditation and the European accreditation structure should be used for assessment and surveillance of the competence of the bodies notified to carry out conformity assessment under the European directives. In order for accreditation to be recognised as a “public authority activity” and to be the highest level of assessment, there needs to be a monopoly status for national accreditation bodies. Furthermore he stressed the need of an enhanced and improved market surveillance as a task of the individual member states. There was a round table discussion with representatives from industry, consumers and conformity assessment bodies, who largely agreed with the proposals. However, in order to balance the lack of competition in the field of accreditation stakeholders are asking for an effective appeals procedure.

With a view to Conformity Assessment and international trade Alan Bryden, Secretary General of ISO, reported on the coherence of the new standardisation system at the international level and connection between accreditation and certification. Daniel Pierre, ILAC chairman, addressed the recognition of test reports and certificates at the international level pointing at progress and difficulties, e.g. within the possible new role of EA in the European legally regulated area in the future.

In a round table discussion on the progress and difficulties encountered by industries and accredited bodies, the cooperation of manufacturer and third party conformity assessment body as well of the differences between self-declaration and third party assessment were discussed.

Status of the documents on the Review of the New Approach: EUROLAB commenting

The revision of the New Approach was launched in 2003 with a Communication to the European Council followed by a Council Resolution. Currently the European Commission is preparing a document on the proposals for a revision. The SOGS (Senior Officials Group for Standardisation and Conformity Assessment Policy) consisting of members from the European Commission and of representatives from the European member states has been discussing the individual elements in 15 separate CERTIF documents.

In December 2005, the first version of a consolidated paper from the single elements was released. (**CERTIF/16**). This paper will be the basis for the final proposal of changes to the Review of the New Approach. Especially the proposed amendments of the Modules and the newly formulated essential requirements will have an impact on the notified bodies. It is therefore important that EUROLAB will voice the position of the third parties at this stage.

Within EUROLAB the developments concerning the review of the New Approach are mainly followed in the EUROLAB/CEOC Joint Technical Committee on Product Testing and Certification (JTC PTC) with their chairman Guy Jacques, who is very active in this issue. So far three rounds of comments have been submitted to the European Commission on the different SOGS papers.

The expected timeframe is that the consolidated paper produced hopefully by consensus of the SOGS will be presented to the Commission early 2006 and that a final paper by the Commission will be forwarded to the European Council in the middle of 2006, possibly for approval by the European Council and the Parliament in 2007/2008.

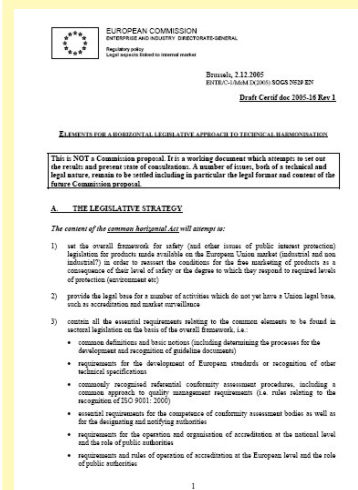
European Conference on the 20th Anniversary of the New Approach, 30 November 2005

About 500 participants attended the Conference “NEW APPROACH: A case of Better Regulation at the service of European Competitiveness’ on 30 November 2005 in Brussels, which was organised by DG Enterprise. EUROLAB was represented by Marc Mortureux who had been asked to give a presentation on the views and experiences from third parties, which is a clear sign of visibility of EUROLAB to the European Commission. Also Guy Jacques, chairman of the JTC PTC attended as well as a number of members also participating in the JTC PTC.

The main tenor expressed by all parties involved was that the New Approach (NA) is a success and that a revision of some aspects is worthwhile. All parties agreed on the need for improvement of market surveillance and a harmonised and efficient notification process, however concerning CE marking views were controversial.



Round table discussion on the Review of the New Approach



In an interesting talk Paolo Cecchini – now retired former member of the European Commission recalled and vividly illustrated the beginning of the New Approach consultations. He came back to the difficult discussions between the member states in 1984 including secret meetings outside Brussels and walks in the park with the individual parties to finally adopt the German model of separating the legislation from the technical requirements in the form of standards. The Director-Quality of LEGO System, Aage S. Hillersborg, presented a view from the industry on the New Approach and issues for improvement. He advocated to keep CE marking as it is now. Also he stressed that self assessment of the manufacturer needs to be followed up by efficient market surveillance to create consumers trust and to allow for a level playing field for industry. The point of view of the consumers was presented by Gottlobe Fabisch (ANEC Secretary-General), advocating the removal of CE marking on the product but recommends a single European conformity mark based on third party assessment.

The role and experience of the third parties was addressed by Marc Mortureux, President of EUROLAB. He stressed the success of the NA from the third parties' point of view because of the higher level of consumer protection that was achieved and pointed to the many third countries having adopted its principles. He emphasised the importance of the role of independent third parties as "competence provider" acting as intersection between the industry, the standardisation bodies and the public authorities. Issues that will need to be improved are well-defined roles of authorities, notified bodies and accreditation bodies, a real and efficient control of the notified bodies, public appointment of the accreditation bodies, market control. He stressed the importance of private marks to support the consumers in their decisions. Concerning globalisation the NA regulation must also strictly be applied and controlled for products from outside of Europe.

In his closing speech Günter Verheugen (Vice-President of the European Commission) called the revision of the NA the flagship of EC's better regulation activities. He referred to the aim not to create a new layer of requirements but to make the system work better and to extend the NA to as many sectors as possible (e.g. cosmetics, emissions, services) in full compliance with the better regulation principle.

NATIONAL MEMBERS' MEETING: 21 OCTOBER 2005 IN PARIS

The EUROLAB National Members' Meeting took place on 21 October 2005 in Paris. Two major topics were discussed in discussion fora:

- Results of the workshop and EUROLAB's position and input to the Revision of the New Approach
- Accreditation with flexible scope

Concerning the latter a workshop "Does innovative industry require flexible laboratory services?" is planned for the 15th May 2006 in Sweden to be organised by the PLG in connection with the coming EUROLAB General Assembly.

Some further topics were:

- the implementation of the new ISO/IEC 17025:2005 requirements
- the draft EUROLAB Technical Report on Measurement Uncertainty for the experienced
- the Computer guideline for laboratory work within ISO 17025 of which the first draft is now discussed in the EUROLAB Technical Committee for Quality Assurance (TCQA)
- a "cookbook" for laboratory questions in the accreditation assessment is worked out by TCQA, e.g. concerning requirements for participation in proficiency tests and concerning interpretation of the results
- financing and promotion of the EPTIS database for proficiency tests
- EUROLAB General Assembly: 16 May 2006, Borås, Sweden.

EUROLAB REPRESENTATION: SOME REPORTS

CROLAB's 1st International Conference on Laboratory Competence

On 3 – 5 November 2005 CROLAB organised, under the auspices of EUROLAB, its first International Conference on Laboratory Competence in Cavtat, Croatia. As this conference which was attended by approximately 140 participants was seen as a success, the CROLAB General Assembly decided to organise the next international conference in October 2007, again in Cavtat.

CROLAB is now also full member of EURACHEM and during the conference a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Wolfhard Wegscheider, the EURACHEM chairman, and Vjera Krstelj on behalf of CROLAB.

NCSLI 2005 Workshop & Symposium

Horst Czichos attended the NCSLI Board of Directors (BOD) Meeting and the NCSLI 2005 Workshop & Symposium "Advances in Science and Technology – Their Impact on Metrology" in Washington in August 2005. The workshop was attended by 1100 participants and consisted of 140 Workshop lectures in 6 parallel sessions. The 2006 NCSLI-President will be Jeff Gust. Horst Czichos established further contacts with Dr. Usuda / APMP (Asia Pacific Metrology Programme) and Ms Cassidy, ACIL (American Council of Independent Laboratories).

Flexible scope of accreditation

Drivers/needs

- Industry in urgent need for **fast development and validation of new technology** (Example: EMC properties of electronic equipment at ever higher frequencies)
- Facilitated **trade of innovative products** influencing health and environment in new ways (Example: Emission from polymer building products)
- **Laboratories' need to meet these requirements efficiently**, to give customers value for money and maintain their staff's belief in the relevance of accreditation
- Similarity of a number of methods, each used seldom but requiring the same competence and equipment

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Beautiful Cavtat

EUROLAB-Germany

Founding of Measurement Uncertainty Circles

In June 2005 EUROLAB Germany organised a workshop on measurement uncertainty for the level of laboratory staff. The aim was to set up uncertainty circles as self-help groups to discuss real examples and problems from daily practice in laboratories. As a result an uncertainty circle was set up in the field of microbiology, which had its first meeting in November 2005. Examples to be discussed will be the determination of e-Coli bacteria with the most probable number (MPN) and the plating methods. A major German PT provider is participating and offered to use the data of a coming PT round. In order to obtain a high number of statistical data the PT was offered at half the price for members of EUROLAB-Germany.

Also in the field of analytical food chemistry an uncertainty circle is being set up as well as a circle for beginners in general.

FRPM'05 - 10th European Conference on Fire Retardant Polymers

From 7 to 9 September 2005 the most important European conference focussing on fire-retardant polymers, the "10th European Meeting on Fire Retardancy and Protection of Materials" FRPM '05 took place in Berlin.

This conference was organised by the Working Group "Resistance of polymers" headed by Dr. B. Scharfel of the Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing (BAM), in co-operation with EUROLAB.

This conference which attracted 200 participants from 24 nations, among them 57% from industrial companies, was a really international event. The conference programme including 43 lectures was supplemented by 35 poster presentations and provided a unique forum for the exchange of fundamental and applied research results between representatives of industry and academia. Nanocomposites as well as phosphorous-based fire retardants were the main conference themes. In addition, fundamental aspects of the fire behaviour and fire-retardant mechanisms, the flame protection of textiles, new test methods, intumescent systems, standardisation and regulations as well as environmental aspects were also discussed. Highlights were not only the interesting and diversified presentations of eminent and renowned experts but also the organisation of the evening events. The poster session where mainly junior scientists presented their ideas and results was accompanied by a rich buffet at the Bornstedt Crown Estate in Potsdam. This particular ambiance contributed to a relaxed and fruitful atmosphere with lively discussions and many contacts. The Conference Dinner took place in the Opera Palais Unter den Linden where M. Zammarano (NIST) was distinguished with the prize for the best poster presentation. The programme was preceded and supplemented by the Cone Calorimeter Workshop which was held on Tuesday, 6 September.

EUROLAB Spain

Acoustics Laboratories Network "ACOUSTILAB"

EUROLAB Spain has created the Acoustic Laboratories Network "ACUSTILAB", like a Network of Laboratories specialized in acoustics which are interested in collaborating with other laboratories in the same field.

This Network is aimed at public and private laboratories which work in the area of acoustics. Due to different organization reasons, at first the Network had been constituted by the Laboratories that form the EUROLAB Spain Acoustics Work Group. Later, it will be possible to invite other prestigious national and international laboratories (from Latin America, Europe, etc...)

All Network members will be included in a public list that will contain their names, contact persons, mail directions, telephone numbers, e-mails and activities related to the Network.

All the Laboratories are accredited by ENAC (Accreditation National Body of Spain) and belong to EUROLAB. These requirements are aimed at ensuring the qualification and the specialization of the laboratory members of the Network.

The objectives of the ACUSTILAB Network are the following:

- To make up a communication platform with other laboratories and International Networks (European, Latin American, etc...)
- To look for subsidies and collaborations with civil services.
- To establish a service database.
- To facilitate the collaboration between members in order to develop inter-comparisons.
- To create discussion forums on the Net to solve typical problems.
- Etc...

EUROLAB-Cz

EUROLAB-Cz of the Czech Republic informs of their new web-address, which is www.eurolabcz.cz.



"ACOUSTILAB"

Acoustics Laboratories Network Introduction

COMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

20.01.06	Chairpersons' meeting, Brussels
01.02.06	MU expert group, BAM, Berlin
07.02.06	CEN/CLC TC 1, Brussels
16.02.06	JTC PTC Brussels, at CEOC office (10:00)
06.-07.03.06	EA Certification Committee meeting, Malta
08.03.06	EA-Inspection Committee meeting, Malta
08.03.06	BoA meeting, Belgium
10.03.06	TCQA, Berlin
March 2006	EUROLAB BoA
March 2006	Measurement Uncertainty from Sampling
14.-15.03.06	EA Laboratory Committee meeting, Prague
15.-16.03.06	PLG, Prague
26.04.06	EAAB CA Network, Brussels
27.04.06	EAAB, Brussels
11.05.06	EEE-PT, Madrid
12.-13.05.06	ILAC PT Consultative Group, Madrid
15.05.06	EUROLAB / PLG Workshop on flexible scopes, Boras, Sweden
16.05.06	EUROLAB GA, Boras, Sweden
18-19.05.06	EURACHEM GA
25-27.05.06	19th Euromet General Assembly, Bulgaria
07-08.06.06	EA GA, Riga
12.-13.09.06	EA LC, Paris
13.-14.09.06	PLG, Paris
13.09.06	EAAB CA Network, Brussels
14.09.06	EAAB meeting, Brussels
18.-19.10.06	EA GA, Istanbul
04.-16.11.06	ILAC/IAF General Assembly, Cancun

EUROLAB'S SERVICE FOR MEMBERS

New websites on the 6th and 7th Framework Programmes (FP) of the European Commission

- 6th FP: Calls for Proposals
<http://fp6.cordis.lu/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.NESTCallsPage>
- New NEST call for proposals: FP6-2005-NEST-Path has been launched on 27 October 2005: <http://www.cordis.lu/nest/calls.htm>
- Information on the Future EU research policy and the FP7 approval process can be found under
http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/future/index_en.cfm - consultation.
The foreseen duration of the new 7th Framework Programme will be 7 years (2007 to 2013) instead of 4 years with a budget of 73 billion Euro and a structure based on four specific programmes: Cooperation, Ideas, People and Capacities. There is no specific metrology programme, but for measurement for industry. The tools will be similar like within the 6th FP.
- Simplification in the 7th Framework Programme:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/future/pdf/ec_2005_0431_1_en.pdf
- General information on the 7th FP at
http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/future/themes/index_en.html

New documents available

The following documents are now available for members in the protected area of the EUROLAB Website. Please note that some documents may only be used as working documents for EUROLAB members when commenting on these drafts. They must not be distributed further!

- First Draft of the "Guideline for the use of computers and software in laboratories with reference to ISO 17025, draft 2005-10-18" is now available and discussed in the TC QA. The scope of the group has been to produce a succinct and comprehensive guideline mainly focusing on managing the requirements specific for computers and software in ISO/IEC 17025.
- Draft **EUROLAB Technical Report on Measurement Uncertainty** – a guideline for the experienced

COMING WORKSHOPS

Under the title "Does innovative industry require flexible laboratory services?" a workshop on flexible scope in laboratory accreditation will be organised on 15 May 2006. During the EUROLAB National members' Meeting on 21 October 2005 the concept was elaborated for this coming EUROLAB Workshop which will be arranged in cooperation with the PLG.



The application in the different countries will be discussed by some examples from laboratories. Also the future needs of industry and how they can be met by laboratories will be discussed and solutions for an innovative way forward will be sought.

“Combining and reporting analytical results. The role of (metrological) traceability and (measurement) uncertainty for comparing analytical results”, International Workshop APAT-IUPAC, *Rome (Italy)*, 6-8 March 2006.

The aim of the workshop, organized by APAT and **IUPAC**, and sponsored by CSM, BIPM CCQM, **CITAC**, **IAEA** and **ISO/REMCO**, is to review and to compare the current practices from various measurement areas and fields (e.g. chemistry, biology) dealing with critical topics, such as combining and reporting analytical data, the metrological traceability, the measurement uncertainty and the tools for its interpretation.

FAREWELL OF THE EUROLAB TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT AT BAM

As the EUROLAB Secretariat will be moved from Germany to France at the beginning of 2006, the team of the EUROLAB aisbl Secretariat at Berlin wishes to thank all EUROLAB members for their support and co-operation during the past years. Originally it was planned to have the Secretariat here in Germany for a maximum period of 4 years, but now that we have completed 7 years we must confess that we have enjoyed these years and have always made all efforts and attempts to serve the EUROLAB laboratory community. Saying goodbye is evoking mixed feelings, sadness because we are giving up the EUROLAB activities and pleasure looking forward to new tasks.

The Secretariat will be taken over by Jean-Marc Aublant and his co-workers of LNE, France, at the beginning of 2006 and the transition will be finally completed after the EUROLAB General Assembly in May 2006. We wish Jean-Marc Aublant and his staff all the best for the future and continued success for the coming years.

We shall not withdraw completely from the work of EUROLAB as some members of our team will also in future support the EUROLAB community with our technical advice both in technical committees and working groups as well as at the secretariat level to ensure a smooth transition of the Secretariat from Germany to France.

Bidding farewell to all of you and wishing you a Merry Christmas !



The team of the EUROLAB Secretariat

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Does innovative industry require flexible laboratory services?

Workshop on flexible scope in laboratory accreditation – some Ideas of TCQA

- State of the art
- View of accreditors
 - EA / SWEDAC / UKAS/DAR
- Examples from laboratories
 - Sector construction or electronics (SP?)
 - Sector chemistry
 - Sector calibration
- Future needs
- Industry
 - Lead time for innovative products
 - Accredited services vs certified industry production
 - ?
- The way forward
 - Interpretation of the standard ISO/IEC 17025 fit for purpose
 - Principles for definition and requirements regarding flexible scope
 - Assessment of personal competence and competence environments.

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