

## New challenges for accreditation – European developments in the field of accreditation

### Contributions of the EAAB

PLG Workshop  
Berlin, 20 September 2007



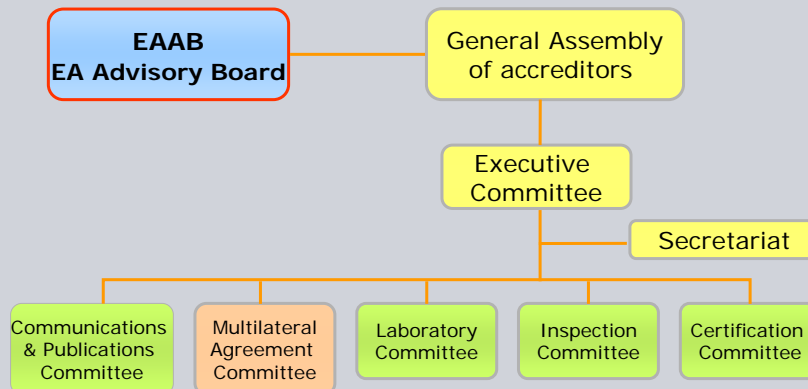
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## Overview

- A EAAB: mission, tasks, composition
- B Stakeholder expectations and policy orientations
- C Contributions to current issues
- D Key topics for future discussion

## EA and EAAB

→ EA is advised by an **Advisory Board** that represents the stakeholders in accreditation at European level



## EAAB - Mission & objectives

### The EAAB shall...

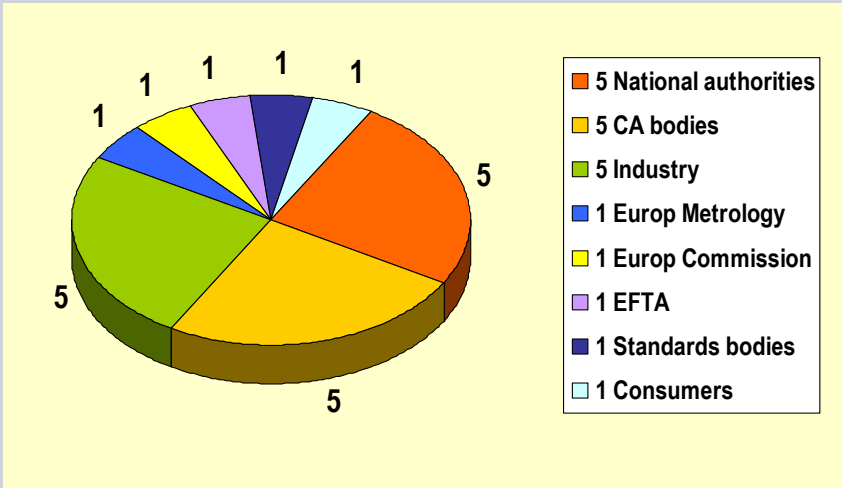
- constitute an **independent body**, composed of the stakeholders to which EA accounts for independence, technical competence, cost effectiveness, impartiality and integrity of its activities
- constitute a **focal point for discussion, consultation and guidance** on matters related to the operation of accreditation
- give advice on the **general direction of accreditation** in Europe
- **oversee the general policy and operations of EA** and determine whether they are conducted in response to the needs of its stakeholders

### EAAB - Tasks & responsibilities

The EAAB ...

- shall be a forum for the **exchange of information, experiences and discussion** on accreditation in Europe with the aim of promoting confidence in accreditation **as a vehicle for one stop testing and certification**
- may give input to the **strategic aims and priorities** to be pursued by EA
- shall give guidance as to the need and desirability of developing harmonisation documents related to accreditation
- may **offer arbitration or advice on disputes** related to accreditation

### EAAB - Composition



## EAAB - Stakeholder expectations & policy orientations (1)

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### → 4 major challenges:

- ▶ Safeguard of the **added value of accreditation** as a tool
  - to ensure confidence and transparency in conformity assessment
  - and to support international trade and competitiveness of business & industry
- ▶ **Competence, consistency** and **efficiency** of accreditation
- ▶ **Use of accreditation** in support of the **implementation of legislation** at national and Community levels
- ▶ Organisation and formal recognition of a properly functioning **European accreditation system operated by EA**

## EAAB - Stakeholder expectations & policy orientations (2)

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### ▶ Safeguard of the added value of accreditation

- **Status of accreditation**
  - Public authority activity
  - No profit-driven business, but service of general interest
  - Last level of control to provide confidence in the entire CA system
  - Prevention of commercial competition between accreditors
  - Cross-frontier accreditation
- **Some control mechanisms**
  - Strict separation between accreditation and CA activities
  - Accountability to all stakeholders
  - Co-operation with regulatory authorities and other accreditors

## EAAB - Stakeholder expectations & policy orientations (3)

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### ► Competence, consistency and efficiency of accreditation

- **Competence** with regard to the specific CA scopes, incl. the technological fields, for which accreditation is sought
  - Assessment needs to focus on technical competence of accredited bodies and their assessors
  - Apply suitably flexible accreditation scopes, where required
  - Strengthen competence-building in the regulatory sphere
- **Consistent** interpretation of accreditation requirements and harmonisation of practices to deliver level playing field for CABs
- **Cost-effectiveness** and speediness of operations
  - Clear definition and delimitation of accreditation scopes
  - Continuous improvement

## EAAB - Stakeholder expectations & policy orientations (4)

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### ► Use of accreditation in support of designation and notification

- Accreditation needs to serve **both regulatory and non-regulatory conformity assessment**:
  - Reduction of need for duplicate assessments & procedures
  - Strengthen free movement of goods by increasing mutual confidence in the equal level of competence of notified bodies
- **Scoping of accreditation**: general accreditation standards need to be complemented and further specified by all relevant product- and technology-related requirements in the specific legislative instrument and all other applicable normative documents

## EAAB - Stakeholder expectations & policy orientations (5)

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### ▶ European accreditation system operated by EA

- Operation of MLA between national ABs, based on robust peer evaluation, to ensure **equivalence, consistency & transparency of accreditation** across Europe and beyond
- Use of the EA MLA in the **designation of notified bodies** and to promote **acceptance of accreditations and accredited CA results** at all levels
- Maintenance of **a single, unified European system**: avoidance of parallel sectorial structures leading to overlaps and duplication
- Use of the relevant international standards and **integration into the international structures** for accreditation (IAF, ILAC)

## EAAB - Contributions to current issues (1)

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### ▶ Community framework for accreditation

- **Principles for the organisation and operation of accreditation at national and EU level** (draft Regulation COM(2007)37 final)

Stakeholders have stressed need for:

- **broad scope** to cover all activities that can be subject to accreditation to avoid duplication of efforts and the risk of creating different structures
- **clear legal basis** for the European accreditation infrastructure and formal recognition of EA
- **clear legal basis for the MLA** and clarification that peer evaluation needs to be operated within the European accreditation infrastructure
- inclusion of a provision on **stakeholder representation** & involvement at both national and European levels

## EAAB - Contributions to current issues (2)

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### ▶ Community framework for accreditation

- **Use of accreditation in support of the designation of notified bodies** (draft Decision COM(2007)53 final)

Stakeholders have recognised need:

- to **reinforce the referential position** of accreditation and the MLA
- for the designating authorities to **co-operate** closely with the national AB; to entrust it with the assessment of all requirements for designation that can be subject to accreditation; and to **presume conformity** with the relevant requirements in respect of the certificates issued by the national AB
- to tie the presumption of conformity to the issue of accreditation **by a signatory to the EA MLA**

## EAAB - Contributions to current issues (3)

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### ▶ EA Development Project “Enhancing European Accreditation”

- Board involved directly in sub-project groups and through contact points nominated by the colleges
- Importance of **efficient communication** and close cooperation with local regulators to provide the necessary level of assurance to rely on accreditation as the technical basis for the notification decisions
- Board welcomed **development of horizontal guidance** for the harmonisation of technical assessments, updating the existing EA documents

Final draft should be submitted to Committee 98/34 for approval and thereafter be applied in conjunction with the harmonised standards to support their presumption of conformity status

## EAAB - Contributions to current issues (4)

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### ▶ EA Development Plan for the years 2007 to 2013

- General support for developing EA into a more professional organisation. EA to remain a cooperative network, but be given the organisational structure and financial means to perform tasks in a management-oriented approach
- Intention to strengthen cooperation with stakeholders may imply need to reinforce existing procedures and structures
- EA to draw up a more detailed business plan, refining the proposals for organisational, operational and administrative developments
- Part of suggested rise in costs should pay for itself by improved efficiency and savings resulting from the performance of assessments in the regulatory sphere

## EAAB - Key topics for future discussion

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- ▶ **Involvement of EA in SOGS and developing cooperation between EA and the EC**
- ▶ **“What is accreditable?”**
- ▶ **Credibility of ISO 9001 certification**
- ▶ **Promotion of EA MLA to increase perception in market place**
- ▶ **Need for an EA MLA mark?**
- ▶ **Enhancement of the peer evaluation process**
- ▶ **Proliferation of standards used for accreditation**