

EVALUATION BY BAM - RESULTS

To maintain the membership in the Deutscher Akkreditierungsrat (DAR) – German Accreditation Council, the accreditation bodies had to undergo an evaluation by the Federal Institute of Materials Research and Testing (BAM). Last year, an international team of evaluators of a colleague of each the Swiss and the Austrian Accreditation Body performed an audit of the DAP Office and two witness audits during assessments in a testing laboratory and in an inspection body. In the meantime, our evaluation was successfully completed so that the DAR confirmed that after closing out the stated non-conformities we comply with the requirements of ISO/IEC and DAR having thus the right to maintain our membership in the DAR and to continue to use the DAR accreditation certificate.

The most important result of this evaluation – as compared to our evaluations by EA (European co-operation for Accreditation) – consisted in identifying that the time of on-site assessment in some cases did not correspond with the extent as usual worldwide and with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011. This circumstance once again caused us to remind our assessors and case managers to reserve sufficient time for initial and repeat assessments (for initial and re-accreditations) and to pay attention to the need of assessing all test areas (if applicable at all locations) and the management system in sufficient depth.

To gain more time, the on-site assessment has to be prepared thoroughly with a positive document review to precede. In the case of initial accreditations, an appointment for an assessment can only be made if the review of all necessary documents and records have resulted in the fact that there are no non-conformities which are contrary to an accreditation.

In the case of surveillance and repeat assessments, we are bound to intervals fixed worldwide, which may not be extended and have to comply with the standard mentioned above. If it is not possible to hand in the documents, especially the updated quality manual before the assessment in time, i.e. four weeks before, the on-site assessment cannot take place.

In such a case, we are obliged to suspend the accreditation provided that the accredited body did not apply for the dormancy of the accreditation itself.

It is not hard to see that observing the approach mentioned before, the time on-site is exclusively used for the assessment of the technical competence and the appropriateness or efficiency of the management system and not additionally for solving problems of missing or incomplete documents.

To facilitate the work of our assessment team we combined the checklist and report thus avoiding the necessity to record the assessment results twice. The new assessment report (see e.g. CH-BT-17025_e) shows yellow fields in which our costumers for initial and re-accreditations as done before enter their locations of the quality documentation with regard to the requirements of the ISO/IEC 17025 as an example.

Electronically sent in, this report is the basis for the assessors' reports filled in during and after the assessment to lay down their evaluations and statements as for the competence and conformity of the assessed bodies. It is not provided to list thoroughly and once again the stated non-conformities in the report but to refer to them by evaluating those, which anyway are handed in to the assessed body as copies in the known non-conformity reports at the end of the assessment.

Dipl.-Ing. Andrea Valbuena

TOPICS

- EVALUATION BY BAM - RESULTS
- ACCREDITATION OF PROVIDERS OF INTERLABORATORY COMPARISONS – REVISION OF ISO/IEC GUIDE 43

ISO CASCO approved the ILAC proposal to revise the ISO/IEC Guide 43 „Proficiency testing by interlaboratory comparisons“ and its conversion into a standard. The work is deemed to begin in 2006 and to end already in 2008. In the DIN Standard Committee NA 147-00-03, a responsible mirror committee will be established.

The revised standard will be named ISO 17043. The ILAC G13, ISO/IEC Guide 43, the ISO/IEC 17025 and an AFNOR document are the basis for the new standard. The revised version of ISO 9000 and the document „The International Harmonized Protocol for the Proficiency Testing of Analytical Chemistry Laboratories“ are also intended to be taken into consideration.

The standard similar to the ISO/IEC 17025 is deemed to define requirements for bodies, which provide interlaboratory comparisons serving as a basis for the accreditation. In general, it is intended to be valid for providers of interlaboratory comparisons without regard to the areas they operate. The aim is to harmonize the accreditation of providers of interlaboratory comparisons worldwide thus establishing the common ground for the international recognition of accreditations of providers of interlaboratory comparisons. In parallel, the ILAC G 13 to be endorsed this year is revised as an interim solution.

At the time being, the accreditation bodies underlie different requirements for the accreditation of providers of proficiency testing. Among others, the ISO/IEC Guide 43 and/or the ILAC Guide G13 are used, in part in combination with the standards ISO/IEC 17025 or ISO/IEC 17020.

Since 2005 DAP has accredited two providers of interlaboratory comparisons, more applications or requests have been sent in. The leading motive to decide on an accreditation is the recognition for the international activities of providers of interlaboratory comparisons.

The up-to-date versions of ISO Guide 43-1 and ILAC G13 in combination with the ISO/IEC 17020 are the basis of the accreditation by DAP, if the provider of interlaboratory comparisons has no testing laboratory or in combination with ISO/IEC 17025 for providers of interlaboratory comparisons with testing laboratories. Thus we can guarantee a vast international recognition of our accreditation.

The accreditation does not refer to individual interlaboratory comparisons – the competence of the provider of interlaboratory comparisons is attested to perform interlaboratory comparisons in a defined scope.

The following main competences have to be available at the provider of interlaboratory comparisons:

- determination of appraisal criteria
- technical knowledge of the test and measurement methods as well as material knowledge in a defined scope
- appraisal of stability and homogeneity of samples
- technical knowledge of statistical methods to appraise the homogeneity and stability as well as the evaluation of the proficiency testing
- appraisal of the participants

The assessment is conducted by one or more assessors (according to the scope) and by one lead assessor. At least, one member of the assessor team has to be trained in the area of accreditation of providers of interlaboratory comparisons or has to have profound knowledge of statistical evaluations of interlaboratory comparisons.

After successful completion of the procedures, our costumers obtain a DAR certificate.

For questions regarding the accreditation of providers of interlaboratory comparisons please feel free to contact our Dr. Lehmann.

Dr. Christian Lehmann

FLAG

Editor

DAP . Ernst-Augustin-Straße 15 . 12489 Berlin-Adlershof . Internet: <http://www.dap.de>
Responsible for Press: Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. habil. Kurt Ziegler . Editorial Staff: Dipl.-Päd. Lothar Käding