



>>ILAC MRA Annual Report 2016



Accreditation:
Delivering Global Confidence



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>> Introduction

ILAC and its accreditation body members invest significant effort and resource to maintain the integrity and consistency of the MRA through a peer evaluation process. This report sets out the detailed activity that is carried out as part of the peer evaluation process, to ensure that regulators, specifiers, and businesses are able to have confidence in the Arrangement.

>> About ILAC

ILAC is the international authority on laboratory, inspection body, reference material producer and proficiency testing provider accreditation, with a membership consisting of accreditation bodies and stakeholder organisations throughout the world.

ILAC provides the infrastructure that supports the world-wide demonstration of competence and equivalence of testing (including medical) and calibration laboratories, inspection bodies and other types of bodies such as reference material producers and proficiency testing providers that support laboratories and inspection bodies through accreditation.

Accreditation of laboratories and inspection bodies supports activities within and between economies including trade, protection of health, safety and the environment for the public benefit. Its essential purpose is to provide confidence in the competence of bodies performing and supporting these activities.

The ILAC Arrangement is an international, multilateral mutual recognition arrangement for accreditation bodies. Participating accreditation bodies agree to promote acceptance of the equivalence of calibration, test and inspection reports produced by accredited facilities. Each accreditation body undergoes peer evaluation according to the International standards and ILAC rules and procedures prior to becoming a signatory to the ILAC Arrangement.

ILAC, the recognised regional cooperation bodies of ILAC and the accreditation body signatories all commit significant time and resources through the peer evaluation process to maintain and improve the integrity, consistency and recognition of the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA). This annual report provides information on the activities carried out as part of the peer evaluation process to ensure that regulators and consumers of laboratory and inspection data are able to maintain confidence in the results produced under the ILAC MRA.



>> The ILAC MRA

The ILAC MRA is an agreement signed by the signatory accreditation bodies to recognise the equivalence of the accreditation programs operated within the scope of their signatory status.

The aim of the ILAC MRA is provide recipients of laboratory and inspection body reports confidence that the results have been generated by a technically competent facility through accreditation by an accreditation body that is a signatory to the ILAC MRA.

The ILAC MRA provides assurance that laboratories and inspection bodies in different economies are operating to the same international standards. The accreditation programs offered by the accreditation bodies that are signatories to the ILAC MRA are all evaluated on an on-going basis to confirm equivalence.

The details of the ILAC MRA are included in ILAC P5 *ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement: Scope and Obligations* available from:

<http://ilac.org/publications-and-resources/ilac-documents/procedural-series/>

>> Scope of the ILAC MRA

The scope of the ILAC MRA covers the following accreditation programs:

- Calibration laboratories using ISO/IEC 17025;
- Testing laboratories using ISO/IEC 17025;
- Medical testing laboratories using ISO 15189; and
- Inspection bodies using ISO/IEC 17020.

>> Signatories to the ILAC MRA

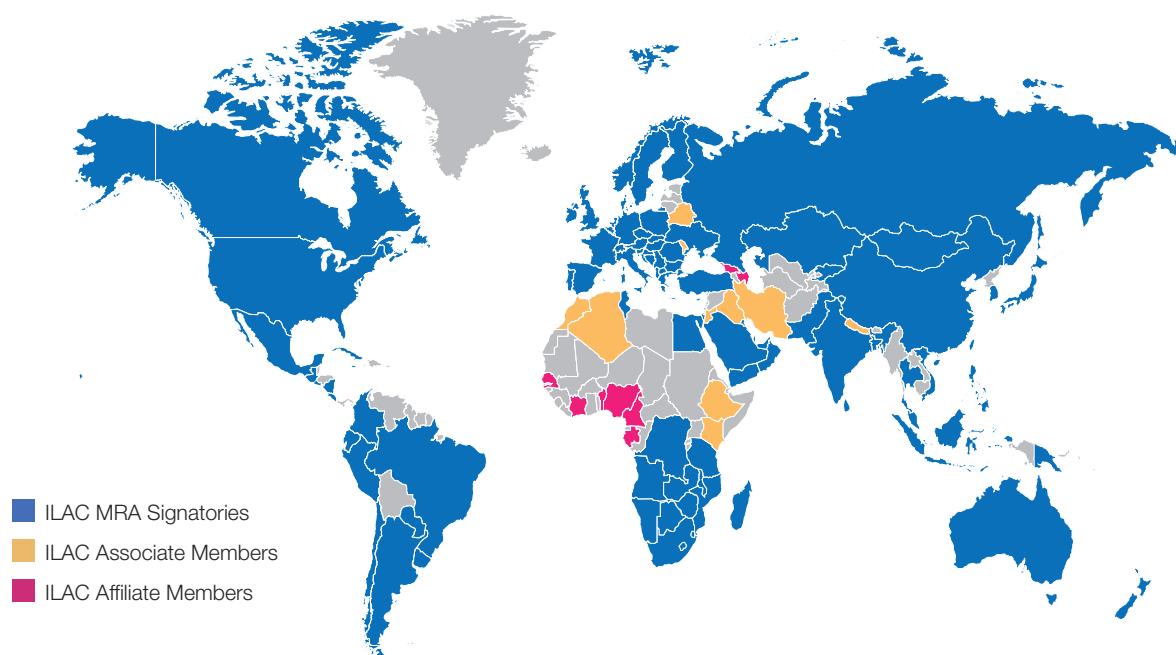
The ILAC MRA is based on the established and peer evaluated multi-lateral arrangements (MRA/MLAs) of the recognised regional cooperation bodies.

Accreditation bodies that are Associate members of ILAC and a signatory to a recognised regional MRA/MLA are automatically accepted as signatories to the ILAC MRA.

Where there is no recognised regional cooperation body available for an accreditation body to be a member, ILAC provides the opportunity for these accreditation bodies to be peer evaluated as an unaffiliated accreditation body.

As of December 2016 there were:

- **3** regional cooperation bodies recognised under the ILAC MRA – Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Co-operation (APLAC), European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) and Inter-American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC);
- **85** accreditation body signatories via the MRA/MLAs of these recognised regions from 77 economies; and
- **6** unaffiliated accreditation bodies – SADCAS (Secretariat – Botswana and also covering Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe), EGAC (Egypt), NCA (Kazakhstan), KCA (The Kyrgyz Republic), SANAS (South Africa) and DAC (United Arab Emirates).
- **Resulting in a total of 91 signatories to the ILAC MRA from 95 economies.**





>> Signatories to the ILAC MRA *continued*

Significant changes to the list of signatories to the ILAC MRA in 2016 includes the addition of the following signatories (new and extensions) for the accreditation scopes listed below:

- General Directorate of Accreditation (DPA), Albania for testing (ISO/IEC 17025);
- National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia (NATA), Australia extension for medical testing (ISO 15189);
- Executive Agency Bulgarian Accreditation Service (EA BAS), Bulgaria for calibration and testing (ISO/IEC 17025), medical testing (ISO 15189) and inspection (ISO/IEC 17020);
- Instituto Nacional de Normalización (INN), Chile extension for inspection (ISO/IEC 17020);
- National Accreditation Authority (NAH), Hungary for calibration and testing (ISO/IEC 17025) and medical testing (ISO 15189);
- Mongolian Agency for Standardization and Metrology, Accreditation Department (MNAS), Mongolia extension for inspection (ISO/IEC 17020);
- National Accreditation Office (ONA), Nicaragua, extension for inspection (ISO/IEC 17020);
- GCC Accreditation Center (GAC), Secretariat in Saudi Arabia and also covering Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, UAE and Yemen for testing (ISO/IEC 17025); and
- Sri Lanka Accreditation Board for Conformity Assessment (SLAB), Sri Lanka extension for inspection (ISO/IEC 17020).

The current version of the list of signatories is available from <http://ilac.org/ilac-mra-and-signatories/>.

The ILAC website includes a dedicated signatory search function available from <http://ilac.org/signatory-search/>. This database of the signatories to the ILAC MRA is searchable by accreditation body name and acronym, economy and scope of signatory status to the ILAC MRA. In addition, this search facility can be hosted directly on your website (via the code provided at the above link) to ensure your customers have access to the latest information on the signatories to the ILAC MRA.

» ILAC MRA AND SIGNATORIES

SEARCH SIGNATORIES PASTE THIS CODE TO YOUR WEBSITE TO HOST THE ILAC MRA SEARCH FACILITY

Accreditation Body: [dropdown] Acronym: [dropdown] Economy: [dropdown] Scope: [dropdown] Find

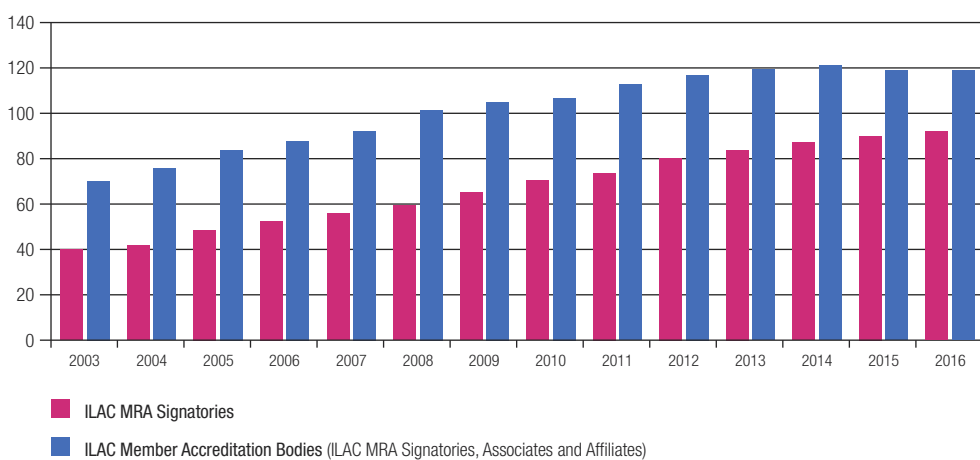
ACCREDITATION BODY:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

>> Global Growth

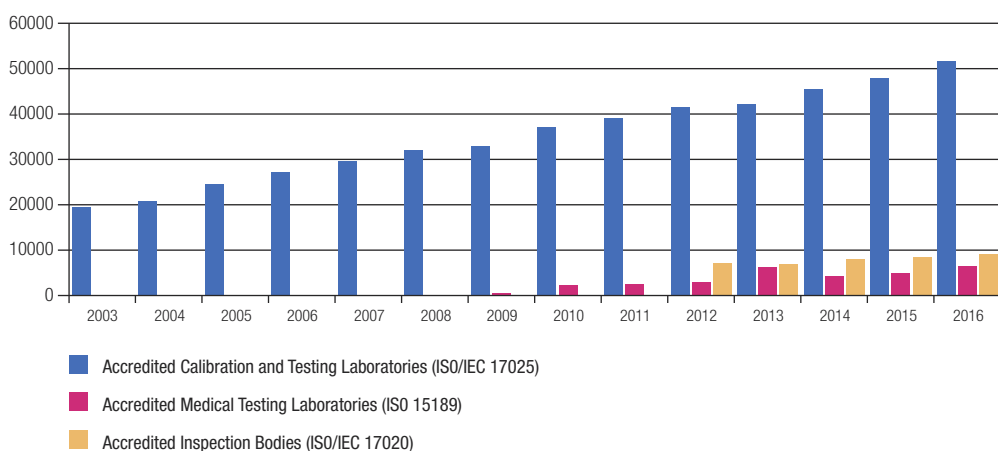
In recent years, there has been a steady geographic expansion of the membership of ILAC through the number of accreditation bodies that have become members of ILAC.

Total Number of Accreditation Bodies



There has also been a corresponding growth in the number of laboratories and inspection bodies that are accredited by ILAC MRA signatories.

Total Number of Accreditation Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs)





>> The ILAC MRA Mark



The signatories to the ILAC MRA and their accredited calibration and testing laboratories and inspection bodies are able to use the ILAC MRA Mark via licensing agreements and in accordance with ILAC R7 *Rules for the Use of the ILAC MRA Mark*.

When used by a conformity assessment body (CAB) on reports or certificates of testing/inspection activities in combination with the accreditation body's accreditation symbol, the Mark demonstrates that the testing or inspection activity has been carried out by an organisation that is accredited by an ILAC MRA signatory for that activity, providing assurance and confidence in the results.

As at December 2016, 66 signatories to the ILAC MRA had signed licensing agreements to use the ILAC MRA Mark.



>> Evaluations

Accreditation bodies are admitted to the ILAC MRA following a stringent evaluation of their operations by a peer evaluation team which is tasked with ensuring the accreditation body fully complies with both international standards and ILAC requirements. The evaluation process results in three types of findings that must be addressed as described below:

- **Non-conformity** – a finding where the accreditation body does not meet a requirement in the International standards, the ILAC or regional requirements or the requirements of its own system. Evidence of the implementation of the changes required by the accreditation body to address these findings must be provided prior to the results of the evaluation proceeding to the decision making process.
- **Concern** – a finding that may lead to a non-conformity. A plan for addressing these findings must be provided and agreed by the evaluation team.
- **Comment** – a finding that may result in an improvement to the accreditation programs offered by the accreditation body.

ILAC, and its accreditation body members, invest significant time and resources to operate a robust peer evaluation process. It is an on-going process, with full re-evaluations carried out every four years, covering all economies and all activities covered by the ILAC MRA.

During 2016, the evaluation activities for the scheduled re-evaluation of one of the recognised regional cooperation bodies were completed and the initial evaluation of a regional cooperation body seeking recognition by ILAC was commenced. The re-evaluation of one unaffiliated accreditation body was finalised in 2016 and the evaluation activities for an initial evaluation and a re-evaluation of unaffiliated accreditation bodies were also carried out.

In addition to these evaluations carried out directly by ILAC, the recognised regional cooperation bodies carried out the following peer evaluation visits:

- APLAC – 11;
- EA – 19; and
- IAAC – 9.

>> Evaluator Resources

Twelve evaluators were involved in the evaluation visits directly carried out by ILAC in 2016. In addition two of these visits included a trainee evaluator funded by ILAC.



>> Decisions by the ILAC Arrangement Council

The ILAC Arrangement Council consists of representatives from the accreditation bodies that are signatories to the ILAC MRA as well as Associate members of ILAC, the regional cooperation bodies and a stakeholder member. It is responsible for the decisions relating to the signatory status of both regional cooperation bodies and unaffiliated accreditation bodies to the ILAC MRA.

On completion of a peer evaluation, the final report prepared by the evaluation team and including information on the close out of any findings is forwarded to the members of the ILAC Arrangement Management Committee (AMC). This committee is responsible for the day to day management of the ILAC MRA. The report is thoroughly reviewed by this committee including where necessary seeking additional information from the evaluation team to clarify any issues. On completion of the review process the AMC prepares a recommendation for consideration by the Arrangement Council.

The ILAC Arrangement Council considered two evaluation reports based on the recommendation of the ILAC AMC in 2016.

The non-conformities included in these two reports related primarily to ensuring the implementation of all normative documents and appropriate transition to updated versions of these documents; voting rules for members; impartiality and related body analyses; and adequate details on the scopes of accreditation.



>> On-going development of the ILAC MRA

ILAC is committed to extending the ILAC MRA in terms of geographic coverage and technical scope. The following developments took place in 2016:

- ILAC membership currently includes 3 regional cooperation bodies, African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC), Arab Accreditation Cooperation (ARAC) and Southern African Development Community in Accreditation (SADCA) that are working towards peer evaluation of their MRA/MLAs to become recognised regional cooperation bodies to the ILAC MRA. The evaluation activities for one of these regional bodies commenced in 2016 and the evaluation team for the evaluation of a second of these bodies was approved in 2016 with a planned commencement in 2017.
- A resolution was adopted at the ILAC General Assembly in October 2014 to extend the ILAC MRA to include accreditation programs covering Proficiency Testing Providers (PTP) using ISO/IEC 17043. The updating of the ILAC requirements documentation and procedures was completed in 2015 to allow the acceptance of applications for the evaluation of proficiency testing provider accreditation programs. Applications for an extension of recognition to include PTP were received from the 3 recognised regional cooperation bodies in 2016.
- A resolution was adopted at the ILAC General Assembly in October 2016 to extend the ILAC MRA to include accreditation programs covering Reference Material Producers (ISO 17034). The ILAC requirements documentation and procedures will be updated in 2017 to allow the acceptance of applications for the evaluation of reference material producer accreditation programs.



>> International standards

ILAC representatives actively participated throughout 2016 in the ISO-CASCO Working Groups that are reviewing ISO/IEC 17011 and ISO/IEC 17025. These are key standards used in the evaluations conducted by ILAC and the regional cooperation bodies and in the accreditation processes of the MRA signatories.



>> New and revised Publications

ILAC regularly publishes requirements and information to support accreditation and conformity assessment processes. During 2016, ILAC released the following publications:

- **ILAC R1: 09/2016** *Management of ILAC Documents*
- **ILAC R4:10/2016** *Use of the ILAC Logo and Tagline*
- **ILAC R5:04/2016** *ILAC Procedure for Handling Complaints*
- **ILAC P4:02/2016** *ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement: Policy and Management*
- **ILAC P5:02/2016** *ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement: Scope and Obligations*
- **ILAC P15:07/2016** *Application of ISO/IEC 17020:2012 for the Accreditation of Inspection Bodies*





>> On-going promotion of the ILAC MRA

Case studies from economies all around the world continue to be added to the publicsectorassurance.org website to illustrate the value of accreditation in key policy areas as a tool to help government officials and regulators deliver results.

The site, which has been put together by **IAF, ILAC, ISO, IIOC** and **IEC**, also contains links to independent research and supporting information to provide additional supporting evidence.

By showcasing the policy areas where accreditation of conformity assessment is, and can be used, such as **economic development, healthcare, environmental protection, energy, food safety, construction, crime and security**, the site continues to provide inspiration for central government, local government and regulators to deliver positive benefit by the use of more conformity assessment tools.

Supporting the needs of government, regulators and the public sector remains a core objective of the conformity assessment community.

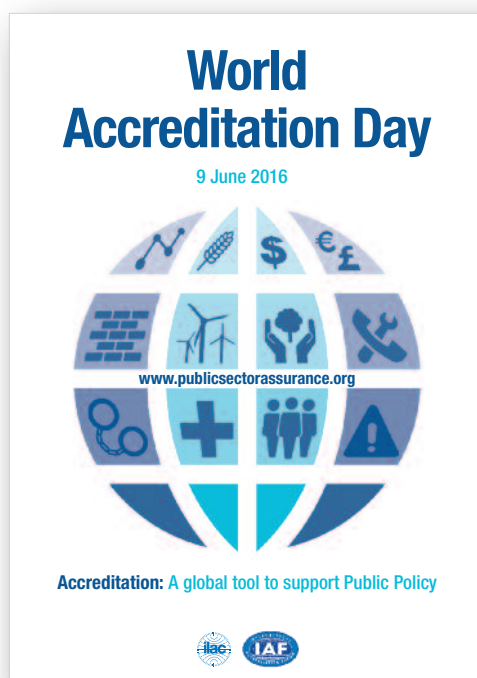


>> World Accreditation Day 2016

The global accreditation community celebrates each year with World Accreditation Day on 9 June to raise awareness of the value that accreditation plays in facilitating global trade or in checking that products are fit and safe for consumption against a standard, a code or practice or regulatory requirements.

The theme for World Accreditation Day in 2016 was “**Accreditation: A Global Tool to Support Public Policy**”.

Accreditation is a global tool that helps to address local, national and international needs for governments. Standards, conformity assessment and accreditation are all market based tools that can be used by Government policy makers to deliver better regulation, environmental protection, public safety, fraud prevention, fair and efficient markets and public trust.





>> Additional Information

The ILAC website (www.ilac.org) provides information on the ILAC MRA (www.ilac.org/ilac-mra-and-signatories/) and also includes brochures (www.ilac.org/publications-and-resources/ilac-documents/promotional-brochures/) and information on World Accreditation Day (www.ilac.org/media-centre/world-accreditation-day/) celebrated on the 9 June each year.

The ILAC Secretariat

PO Box 7507
Silverwater NSW 2128
Australia

Phone: +61 2 9736 8374

Email: ilac@nata.com.au

Website: www.ilac.org



@ILAC_Official



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