APLAC is an organisation of laboratory accreditation bodies in the Asia Pacific area that have expressed a desire to cooperate in fostering the development of competent laboratories in member economies.

Cooperation is to include:
- Exchange of information
- Joint training programs
- Proficiency testing
- Harmonisation of requirements
- Mutual recognition of systems meeting harmonized requirements

APLAC NEWS NOTES is published six times a year to facilitate the exchange of information among members and interested parties. It is not copyrighted and may be reproduced in full. Excerpts should reference APLAC News Notes specifically. Wide copying and distribution are encouraged.

APLAC also maintains an Internet site at: www.aplac.org

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This issue is published by
China National Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment (CNAS)

The next issue will be published in May 2007 by DSM (Malaysia)

News from APLAC Secretariat
Janet Clark & Helen Liddy

We wish all our Chinese colleagues a prosperous year of the golden pig!

Changes at the Secretariat

We are sad to advise that Jane King has left the secretariat as she has been appointed as the manager of NATA's accreditation program for R & D laboratories. We wish Jane all the very best in her new work, and thank her for all her excellent work within the secretariat over the last 3 years. It is not planned to replace Jane at this stage but Janet and Helen will still be at the end of an email to answer your queries, etc.

New APLAC Member

We are pleased to welcome AAC Analitica of the Russian Federation as the newest Full Member of APLAC – one more APEC economy joins our cooperation.


The new APLAC Quality Manual that replaces several APLAC SEC and PR documents and also NC 001 was issued in early February. Members are encouraged to download a copy from the APLAC web site and familiarise themselves with it.

The first edition of the APLAC evaluation report template was also issued in early February as APLAC MR 009. This template is designed to facilitate the production of the report, with the AB being evaluated completing sections 3 and 4 (history and background
of AB; AB’s self-assessment against the KPIs (IAC/IAF A3)). It is available as a PDF from the public area of the web site and as a Word document in the “members only” area of the web site.

APLAC Board of Management and MRA Council Meetings

The BoM and MRA Council will meet in Shanghai, People’s Republic of China on 16-17 April (BoM) and 18-20 April (MRA Council). We thank CNAS for hosting the meetings. A workshop on reviewing evaluation reports will be held during the Council meeting. Members are asked to register for the meetings and confirm their hotel reservations as early as possible.

During the Council meeting there will be the inaugural signing of the APLAC MRA for accreditation of medical laboratories to ISO 15189: previously recognition for this area of accreditation had been included within the “testing” scope of the MRA.

APLAC Evaluator Training Course

A training course for evaluators and provisional evaluators will be held in Shanghai on 23-25 April. The course coordinator is Ned Gravel of CAEAL, and Ned, Barry Ashcroft (IANZ) and Panadda Silva (DMSc) are the course presenters.

APLAC Training Courses in 2007

A most successful workshop on the planning and conduct of PT courses in accordance with ISO/IEC Guide 43 was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 13-15 February. Our thanks to Standards Malaysia that hosted the meeting. This was the first in a series of 3 workshops run by APLAC in conjunction with PTB, Germany. It was pleasing to have colleagues from non-APLAC member economies, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Laos and Nepal join the workshop, thanks to funding support for them from PTB.

An APLAC workshop on the accreditation of medical laboratories to ISO 15189 will be held in Bangkok, Thailand on 15-17 May, hosted by DMSc. One of the presenters will be Dr Robert Wielgosz of BIPM who will give a presentation on the activities of JCTLM. This interactive workshop is aimed at those AB staff and assessors with experience in accrediting medical laboratories as the participants will be asked to present details about their organisations’ accreditation programs and to discuss experiences. Regina Robertson (NATA) and Panadda Silva (DMSc) (a very busy lady!) will also be presenters.

An APLAC training course on the accreditation of reference material producers will be held in Tsukuba, Japan on 30 May-1 June, hosted by IAJapan. The presenters will be Dr A M van der Veen of NMi (Netherlands), W W Wong (HKAS) and Roxanne Robinson (A2LA).

These latter 2 courses are open to 1 attendee from each APLAC member and also from each ILAC region (including the group of unaffiliated bodies). Registration (with the APLAC secretariat) and hotel reservations (directly with the hotel) should be made as early as possible.

APLAC 2007

The APLAC General Assembly and associated meetings will be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in the week of 2-7 December, hosted by Standards Malaysia.
News from ILAC

Review of the MCC Marketing Workshop Held in Cancun, Mexico, 11 November 2006

Ian Roy

The ILAC Marketing and Communications Committee (MCC) held a Marketing Workshop at the ILAC Meetings in Cancun in November 2006.

The purpose of the workshop was to provide general guidance on what marketing is in relation to accreditation bodies and to highlight the resources that have been developed by the MCC for use by accreditation bodies. The workshop was attended by 64 people representing accreditation bodies from around the world.

Jon Murthy of UKAS provided a succinct overview of what marketing was, and what a marketing plan contained. Jon also spoke about the distinctly different target audiences that would be interested in accreditation and emphasised that it was important to prioritise which specific audiences an accreditation body saw as important. Limited resources means an accreditation body has to select the most important audiences.

Jon emphasised it was also important to understand the differing needs of target audiences, with one message for all audiences being inappropriate.

The subjects of “communication” and “business tools” were also identified by Jon as crucial to successfully marketing an accreditation body’s business. All accreditation bodies, irrespective of their size and budget, can choose how they will communicate their message to their target audiences, from using a sophisticated website, to letters, emails, brochures, DVDs and presentations. No matter what method of communication an accreditation body chooses to use, keeping the message consistent and building a brand, most likely through the consistent application of an accreditation body logo to all the marketing materials, is crucial to getting the message across to different target audiences.

There are many sources of information that can be used to develop an accreditation body’s own marketing campaign. Of primary importance is the “brochure series” of documents available on the ILAC website (http://www.ilac.org/promotion.html, please note these documents are currently only available in the members only section for which an access password is required) which have been developed by the ILAC Marketing and Communication Committee (MCC).

The titles include:
Why Use an Accredited Laboratory?
Why Become an Accredited Laboratory?
How Does Using an Accredited Laboratory Benefit Government and Regulators?
The Advantages of Being an Accredited Laboratory
Laboratory Accreditation or ISO 9001 Certification

These documents are also available in Chinese, Japanese, Hindi, Spanish, Russian, French and German languages. These brochures are available in “word format” so the text can be applied to an individual accreditation body’s promotional and marketing literature.

Some accreditation bodies have already printed the ILAC brochures with the accreditation body’s contact details and logo clearly visible. The accreditation body do not need to research, write, or edit the brochures. Simply printing with the accreditation body’s information on the brochures is all that is required to provide a valuable marketing resource for accreditation bodies. However, some accreditation bodies have translated the brochures to the language...
used in their own economy.

The ILAC website also contains a series of powerpoint presentations that have been prepared for accreditation bodies to use in meetings or workshops. In addition, a CD-ROM, developed by the MCC, was distributed in Cancun to enable accreditation bodies to create their own pop-up banner which can be used at events. Primer documents are also downloadable from the site, which provide members with a step-by-step guide to carry out their own marketing initiatives.

Resources on the EA and APLAC websites provide further web based resources that accreditation bodies may freely use.

At the workshop, the “brochure series” were colourfully displayed in large format for all to see. Members of the MCC provided further explanation of the brochures to the workshop attendees during the morning break.

Other speakers at the workshop were Maria Oldegard from SWEDAC, Martine Blum from COFRAC, and Giselle Guevara from TTLABS, who along with Jon Murthy from UKAS, provided inspiring examples of marketing campaigns from their respective accreditation bodies.

Giselle emphasised that the Trinidad and Tobago accreditation body, TTLABS, was a small accreditation body on a modest budget, but there were many marketing initiatives TTLABS successfully conducted without the budget of a larger accreditation body.

A common theme at the workshop that was shared by all speakers, irrespective of the size of their accreditation body and marketing budget, was the use of creativity and imagination as valuable and free tools to be used in an accreditation body’s marketing campaign.

It was universally agreed by the speakers that the documents the MCC have provided, the “brochure series” (available in several languages) are a key resource that all accreditation bodies can use.

The marketing workshop feedback survey has indicated the event was a major success with 94% of respondents noting the workshop was “good to excellent”. Many respondents requested the marketing workshop be repeated again during the ILAC meetings scheduled for Sydney in 2007.

**Updates of CNAS**

**CNAS Held a Workshop on Accreditation of Medical Laboratories**

A Workshop on Medical Laboratories was held in Guangzhou China hosted by China National Accreditation Service of Conformity Assessment (CNAS) on 27–29, Jan. 2007.

Experts in the fields of laboratory accreditation or laboratory medicine from Canada, Mainland China, Hong Kong and Chinese Taipei attended the workshop. They jointly exchanged and discussed the experiences and existing problems in the accreditation of medical laboratories and implementation of ISO 15189.

Two government departments related to the medical laboratory regulation, Certification and Accreditation
Administration (CNCA) and Ministry of Health (MOH), P. R. China had shown great interests in the discussions at the workshop. They both sent representatives to participate and made speeches at the workshop.

The Workshop covered topics of some common interests in those economies regarding accreditation and regulation of medical laboratories, including setting up and marketing for the medical laboratory accreditation program, the relationship between the government regulation and the accreditation, the process of accreditation and the ways to enhance its credibility, the major difficulties in implementation of ISO 15189, the possibilities of strengthening cooperation among the region and the sharing of expertise and other technical resources such as PT programs. The workshop also reviewed the progress of international mutual recognition arrangement in the field of medical laboratory accreditation.

The workshop was conducted in both English and Chinese languages, which had led to a better communication and understanding among the colleagues from this group of economies than that at any other similar international forum.

The workshop is recognized by the relevant government authorities in China as a very informative and in-depth forum in the field of medical laboratory accreditation and regulation, and the results from this workshop will form useful inputs into the relevant policy making process in China.

The workshop is also highly appreciated by the participating parties as a successful experience sharing opportunity, and it opened the door to closer technical cooperation in the field medical laboratory accreditation among the region. To this end, all parties agreed to continue with this form of experience sharing in future, taking into consideration the results from this workshop.

**Wider Use of CNAS’ Accreditation by Government of China**

CNAS’ accreditation are now recognized and used more and more widely in recent years by regulators in China. Following are the latest development in this respect:

a) Beijing Health Bureau requested that organizations that provide medical and health service for 2008 Olympic Games shall be accredited by CNAS to ISO 15189 and shall comply with ISO 15190 for safety. This is the action taken by Beijing government to ensure the quality, competence and safety of testing related to medical and health service for Olympic Games.

b) Standing Committee of National People’s Congress promulgated an order on Administration of Judicial Testing which required that organizations engaging in judicial testing activities shall have a testing facility accredited by CNAS. This is the action taken by Chinese government to strengthen the administration of judicial testing organizations so as to improve the justice system in China.

**News from ema**

**Mexico’s National Accreditation Compact**

*Maria Jose Mesen*

The Mexican Accreditation Entity (ema), in an effort to reinforce accreditation in the country, has taken
up the task of setting in motion the initiative of the National Accreditation Compact (PNA for its Spanish abbreviation).

What is the PNA? It is a voluntary initiative that consist of a public engagement made by companies, organizations and government offices (federal, state and municipal) in which they commit to adopt and support a set of actions, with the intention of promoting and strengthening the Mexican Metrology, Standardization and Conformity Assessment System (SISMENEC for its Spanish abbreviation).

The purpose of this Compact is that all the accredited structure of the country be well-used by all its users: industry, trade, conformity assessment bodies, government offices, universities, research centers, individuals, etc.

The PNA is a voluntary affiliation instrument, it is not a legislative instrument, neither does it allow certification or accreditation. The Compact works as a network where those who sign it, according to their policies, needs and/or possibilities, commit to carry out one or all of the following actions:
1. To know accreditation and its benefits.
2. Use the country’s accredited structure (accredited laboratories, certification bodies and inspection bodies).
3. Spread accreditation activities and advantages.
4. Continuously improve the accreditation process.
5. Participate in accreditation activities.
6. Report accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies that do not operate according to principles of ethics, transparency and confidentiality.

To be part of the National Accreditation Compact, the interested party must fill in an application form and direct it to ema’s Executive Direction, declaring its interest in the Compact. After signing the PNA, each signatory is responsible of fulfilling the acquired commitments; hence there will be no evaluation, but every 12 months they must hand in a report with progresses and activities carried out according to the actions applied for.

The activities to promote the PNA begun last November when ema visited different Associations and Chambers, achieving the signature, on December 7th 2006, of Mexico City’s Chamber of Trade, Services and Tourism and 4 of its Associations, becoming then the first signatory with the commitment of adopting and supporting all six of the actions.

On January, Mexico’s electric sector decided to be a part of the PNA, and on the 31st of the month, in the facilities of the Federal Electrical Commission, 56 signatories were added to the Compact. During the event held on that day 201 people were present. Later, on February 13th, the Industrial Chamber’s Confederation, with other 18 signatories were added.

To the end of February the PNA has gathered more than 200 signatures, among which are industries, research centers, engineer associations, accredited laboratories and bodies, assessors, etc.

Even though many have already signed the PNA, the formal launching of the National Accreditation Compact will be carried out on March 20th. On this day we expect to have gathered 1000 signatures. It is ema’s goal to have 3000 signatories by December 2007.

At ema, we believe the PNA to be one of our most
ambitious projects for this year, due to its importance in strengthening accreditation at a national level, which is why lots of effort and promotion is being put into this initiative.

**Recognition of PT Providers in Mexico**

In December 2006, the Mexican Accreditation Entity (ema) granted two recognitions for Proficiency Testing Providers. This marks the beginning of a long road that must be covered to strengthen PT Programmes in the country.

Of the two PT Providers awarded, one is the Mexican Association on Clinical Biochemistry (Asociación Mexicana de Bioquímica Clínica A.C.) with a recognition for Medical Laboratories in the area of Medical Chemistry.

The other is Electrical Certification and Standardization (Normalización y Certificación Electrónica, A.C.) which has been recognized as a proficiency testing provider for testing laboratories in the electric-electronic area.

Although it sounds like a small number of recognitions, it is a big step for ema, and it is hoped the number will increase over time.

**News from NATA**

**Honours for NATA’s Chair**

NATA Chair Dr Barry Inglis has been awarded a Public Service Medal in the Australia Day Honours for outstanding public service in the field of measurement science, particularly his leadership role in the establishment of the National Measurement Institute.

According to NATA CEO, Mr Tony Russell, Dr Inglis was recognised for providing outstanding leadership of Australian science in the field of metrology.

“He led the establishment of the National Measurement Institute (NMI), working with a broad constituency to create a scientific institution that has a unified vision, converging culture, reputation for output at the highest levels of international scientific performance and an expanding relationship with stakeholders,” Mr Russell said.

“In 2004, Dr Inglis was appointed inaugural Chief Executive Officer and Chief Metrologist of the NMI and has since established the organisation’s capacity to deliver world-class measurement science and services.”

Dr Inglis contributed to the development of metrological infrastructure in the Asia-Pacific region and the scientific directions of international metrology, and used those directions to shape Australian research efforts.

The Commonwealth Governor-General’s Departmental website Australia Day award summary highlighting Dr Inglis’ work said, “Dr Inglis demonstrated an intense commitment to the practical application of metrological science, fostering the development of calibration and testing laboratories across Australia through his service over many decades as a member and, later, as Chairman of the National Association of Testing Authorities.”

The profile praised Dr Inglis’ personal dedication and commitment have provided an appropriate platform for Australia’s measurement system into the 21st century.
Dr Inglis expressed his appreciation of being awarded the honour.

“One does not work in the expectation of recognition but it is very pleasing if it comes along. I am of course delighted to receive the award, but I am particularly pleased for the recognition that it gives to the significance of the National Measurement Institute,” he said.

The Australia Day Honours, introduced in 1975, enables citizens to receive recognition for excellence, achievement and outstanding service in many fields.

Processed by the Awards and Culture Branch of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Prime Minister recommends awards to the Governor-General.

The award ceremony will take place on 9 May at Government House, Sydney, and will be presented by Her Excellency the Governor of NSW.

NATA Chair - Dr Barry Inglis, BE (Hon), PhD, FIE (Aust), CP Eng, FIEEE, FMSA, FTSE, (Chairman and Audit Committee Member) Chief Executive and Chief Metrologist, National Measurement Institute, Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources.

**News from NVLAP**

**NVLAP Signs MOU with VCCI**

The National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) and the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on December 13, 2006, in Tokyo, Japan, with the Voluntary Control Council for Interference (VCCI). VCCI is a Japanese organization started in the mid-1980s by four Japanese industry companies seeking to control

emissary interference (EMI) with the backing of the Japanese government.

By signing this memorandum, NVLAP and A2LA intend to provide ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation of any electromagnetic compatibility testing laboratory to the Normative Annex 1 Technical Requirements of Regulations (VCCI V-3) for voluntary control measures of VCCI. NVLAP and A2LA will be responsible for notifying VCCI directly with all pertinent information for those laboratories that are accredited to perform testing to VCCI V-3. A form has been developed to capture the necessary information requested by VCCI. This form will be completed during the course of the laboratory assessment. For questions or comments on this agreement, please contact Kurt Fischer at kurt.fischer@nist.gov or (301) 975-6061.

To learn more about VCCI, visit the VCCI web site at: [http://www.vcci.or.jp/vcci_e/index.html](http://www.vcci.or.jp/vcci_e/index.html)

Kurt Fischer of NVLAP and Brad Moore of A2LA meet with representatives of the Voluntary EMC Accreditation Center (VLAC) and the Voluntary Control Council for Interference (VCCI) at the MOU signing dinner in Tokyo.

**NVLAP Personal Body Armor Program**

The National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) has agreed to establish a laboratory accreditation program to support the voluntary minimum performance standard for the ballistic- and stab-resistance of personal body armor,
developed for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Office of Law Enforcement Standards (OLES).

The program will address ballistic- and stab-resistant body armor submitted to the NIJ/National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC) for testing and certification in accordance with applicable NIJ standards. Laboratory test results will be used for the purposes of preparing NIJ’s Personal Body Armor Consumer Product List. NVLAP-accredited laboratories testing the equipment for certification by NLECTC must be independent of body armor manufacturers, NIJ, NLECTC, and OLES, and be able to perform all of the selected tests as specified in the applicable NIJ standard.

If you would like more information on the Personal Body Armor Program, please contact Hazel M. Richmond at hazel.richmond@nist.gov or (301) 975-3024.

NVLAP Radiation Detection Instruments program

The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requested that NIST establish a laboratory accreditation program for laboratories that test radiation detection instruments used in homeland security applications. In response to the request by DHS, and after consultation with interested parties through public workshops and other means, the National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) has agreed to establish the accreditation program.

NVLAP will accept applications from laboratories that perform testing of radiation detection instruments, such as handheld detectors, radionuclide identifiers, and portal monitors, using standards developed by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), and DHS.

If you would like more information on the Radiation Detection Instruments program, please contact Betty Ann Sandoval at betty.sandoval@nist.gov or (301) 975-8446.

Sally Bruce, NVLAP Chief, presents an overview of the NVLAP program, while Jeffrey Horlick and Betty Ann Sandoval confer on the next presentation.

The National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) held an assessor training seminar on March 14, 2007, for new assessors for two new U.S. Department of Homeland Security-related programs - Radiation Detection Instruments and Personal Body Armor. Several veteran assessors also attended. NVLAP staff presented all sections of the NIST Handbook 150, *NVLAP Procedures and General Requirements*, which contains the general procedures and requirements under which NVLAP operates as an unbiased third-party accreditation body.
APLAC PUBLICATIONS LIST

Most of the following APLAC documents are available from the APLAC website. They can also be emailed out by the APLAC Secretariat as PDF files.

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**APLAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement Advisory Committee**

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APLAC PR008  Issue No.28  International Recognition of Accredited Test, Calibration
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APLAC PR009  Issue No.5  APLAC Procedures for Editors of APLAC News Notes
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APLAC PR010  Issue No.1  Encouraging Accredited Laboratories and Inspection
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APLAC PR011  Issue No.1  Guidance for the Promotion of the APLAC MRA
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APLAC Presentation  Power Point Slide Template

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**APLAC Guidelines for Food Testing Laboratories.**

**Guidelines on Training course for Assessors**

* Adherence to these APLAC documents is mandatory for all APLAC members (Full and Associate)

# Adherence to these APLAC documents is mandatory for all signatories to the APLAC mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA)