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EA Conditions For the Use of Accreditation Marks

PURPOSE

This document sets out the core set of conditions which shall be included in the rules governing the use, by accredited laboratories, certification and inspection bodies, of National Accreditation Logos which are administered by EA member bodies.

Authorship

The publication has been written by EA Committee on Publications and Promotion

Official language

The text may be translated into other languages as required. The English language version remains the definitive version.

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1 INTRODUCTION

In this text, in accordance to the IAF guidance on application of ISO/IEC Guide 61 , the term « shall » is used to indicate those provisions which, reflecting the requirements of ISO/IEC Guide 61, are mandatory. The term « should » is used to indicate those provisions which, although they constitute guidance for the application of the requirements, are expected to be adopted by an accreditation body.

2 OBJECT

Accredited bodies should use the National Accreditation Logo (NAL) to demonstrate a third party recognition of their competence.

The various aspects an Accreditation Body shall cover when working out the rules for use of its NAL by such accredited bodies are detailed below.

3 REFERENCES

- ISO/IEC Guide 61: 1996 (EN 45010) : General requirements for assessment and accreditation of certification/registration bodies
- ISO/IEC Guide 58 : 1993 (EN 45003) : Calibration and testing laboratory accreditation systems - General requirements for operation and recognition
- IAF Guidance on Application of ISO/IEC Guide 61 - Issue 1 - June 1997
- ISO/IEC TR 17010 : General requirements for bodies providing accreditation of inspection bodies

4 GENERAL RULES

4.1 National Accreditation Logos and Marks

EA members, hereafter referred to as accreditation bodies (AB) shall have one official logo, (its National Accreditation Logo - NAL) or, where relevant, one logo per accreditation scheme.

The logo used by the AB may be different from that to be used by the accredited bodies.

In this text, we refer distinctly to logos and marks according to the following:

- the logo is the symbol used by the AB to communicate its name or accreditation scheme, for instance :



The NAL should be legally protected. Formal registration is recommended.

- the mark is the symbol used by the accredited body to communicate its status. It is a combination of the AB's logo in association with the registration number and identification of the accredited area, for instance:



4.2 Use of the mark and full-text reference to accreditation

The AB shall state conditions for the use of its mark and name or full-text reference to the accreditation delivered under its scheme.

The AB shall set out minimum requirements regarding such a use on :

- documents directly related to an accredited service such as reports or certificates
- letterhead
- promotional materials.

Use of the mark or other full-text reference to accreditation shall not mislead as to what is accredited (scope) or who holds accreditation, the accredited body being responsible for correct use of the mark under its accreditation.

4.3 Reproduction of the mark

The AB shall have published documentation with the rules for display of the mark including information on :

- format, proportions, size and colours of the mark :
 - location of the registration number
 - possible mention of the accreditation standard
 - mention of the accredited field : AB are encouraged to promote reference to the accreditation fields as defined in the EA multilateral agreement, eg : testing, calibration, inspection and certification

- relative placing of the mark and the accredited body's logo and the logo of a party which uses accredited services
- positioning of the mark and number of marks on reports, certificates and every document issued within the frame of an accredited service

4.3.1 Embossed, relief or die-stamped versions

Embossed, relief or die-stamped versions may be used in the relevant colours or in black&white.

4.3.2 Multiple accreditations

Accredited bodies holding multiple accreditations may have the possibility of using only one mark where identical mark is used for each accreditation scheme. The mark shall include reference to each of the accredited fields and each registration number.

The AB rules for use of the mark shall address such a case.

Description of the accreditation scope shall be clear and unambiguous. When issuing results relating to accredited services, information shall be clearly given as to which results are covered by which accreditation scheme.

5 RULES FOR USE BY ACCREDITED BODIES

5.1 Rights to use

To be entitled to make reference to its accreditation or to use the mark, a body shall

- be accredited, i.e its accreditation shall be valid
- comply with the relevant rules set out by the AB

Results issued by an accredited organisation, without the NAL (or reference made to the accredited status) cannot be granted the presumption of conformity with the clauses of the standards EN 450XX nor with the provisions of the MLA.

5.1.1 Suspension of accreditation

An AB shall specify the limitations on the use of the mark upon suspension of accreditation.

In particular, an accredited body shall upon suspension, including partial suspension, immediately cease to issue reports, certificates or labels bearing the mark or full-text reference to accreditation, as well as any document directly related to its accreditation.

However the AB may enable a body whose accreditation has been suspended to use letterheads or documents bearing the mark or full-text reference to accreditation under conditions and within a period duly specified by the AB.

5.1.2 Termination of accreditation

Upon termination of accreditation, the body shall immediately stop publishing any document bearing the mark or full-text reference to accreditation.

The body shall make arrangements concerning such use or reference by customers of those bodies.

5.1.3 Non accredited activities

Accreditation shall not be stated, implied or suggested for non accredited activities, in particular :

- a body which holds accreditation for only part of its activities may use the mark or make reference to accreditation provided there is no confusion as to which field has been accredited.
- whenever a body is composed of several sites among which at least one has not been granted accreditation, only those accredited sites shall make reference to accreditation or use the mark. When a common document is issued, a disclaimer printed close to the mark shall state for instance : « List of accredited sites and scopes available on request. »
- whenever a subsidiary belonging to a group has been accredited, there shall not be any confusion as to which part of the group holds accreditation. Communication shall not imply other subsidiaries have been accredited. In particular, when a common document is to be issued, the list of the accredited bodies shall be included.

5.2 Documents and Promotional Media

5.2.1 Publicity materials

The rules shall set out the conditions under which the mark may be used on promotional and publicity materials. Basically, they shall permit such a use only on documents which refer at least in part to an accredited activity.

In this context, the mark can be put on the vehicles used by the accredited body.

5.2.2 Letterheads

The rules shall set out the conditions under which the mark may be used on letterheads. In particular they shall provide for requirements to be met regarding relative placing and proportions of both the mark and the accredited body's logo or any other logo.

On commercial documents such as quotations or proposals (including the associated stationery) related to services which do not fall into the body's accreditation, it shall be clearly and unambiguously identified which services are accredited.

If a quotation concerning exclusively non accredited services is to be printed on letterhead bearing the mark, it shall contain a disclaimer, easy to read, stating for instance : « This quotation concerns services which do not fall into accreditation. »

Letters to be printed on letterhead bearing the mark and going with reports or certificates containing no accredited results shall include a disclaimer stating for instance : « Attached results are not covered by accreditation»

5.2.3 Business cards

The rules shall not permit either use of the mark or full-text reference to accreditation on business cards held by the accredited body's staff.

5.2.4 Other uses

Subject to conditions stated in this document, the use of the mark on items other than those described in this document is not discouraged. The accredited body shall then seek approval from the AB prior to any release.

5.3 Reports and certificates

5.3.1 General rules

The rules shall set out the minimum requirements to be satisfied to include the mark on reports and certificates.

The rules shall not allow use in such a way as to state, imply or suggest that the AB accepts responsibility for the accuracy of test, calibration or inspection results or certification decisions covered by accreditation.

They shall not allow such a use that states, implies or suggests that the AB approves a calibrated instrument, test or inspection item or product, or that suggests product approval by the AB.

The mark shall not be included in reports or certificates containing no accredited results. Nor shall such reports or certificates present any reference to the accreditation status.

5.3.2 Laboratories and inspection bodies

5.3.2.1 Calibration laboratories

For the mark to be used, calibration certificates shall include a majority of accredited results.

All non accredited results shall be clearly identified as such.

AB shall restrict the use of calibration labels to equipment which have been calibrated under the accredited scope.

5.3.2.2 Testing laboratories and inspection bodies

When using the mark on testing or inspection reports containing any non-accredited results, accredited bodies shall include on the cover page a disclaimer printed close to the mark, stating clearly which tests and inspections are accredited.

This disclaimer must be thoroughly readable. In addition, accredited results shall be clearly identified in the report.

Opinions, interpretations or other material relating to investigational activities issued by an accredited laboratory

A laboratory is likely to issue reports incorporating the mark and containing opinions, interpretations or other material relating to investigational activities. When such statements are outside the scope of accreditation, the report or certificate shall include, close to the mark or to the expression of opinion, a disclaimer such as : « The opinions/interpretations expressed in this report are outside the scope of this body's accreditation. »

Site calibration/testing

A laboratory which holds accreditation for site calibration/testing shall use the mark in the same way as for calibration/testing performed in a permanent laboratory.

Requirements for use of the mark shall apply in the same way.

5.3.3 Management System Certification Bodies

The AB's rules shall state that

- for a certificate or other certification document to be regarded as accredited, it shall be issued by a certification body in accordance with the conditions of its accreditation and unambiguously identify the accreditation body and the issuing certification body;
- where a certification body holds more than one accreditation covering the scope of the certification, the certificates or other certification documents shall identify at least one of the accreditation bodies.

6 **USERS OF ACCREDITED SERVICES**

The AB shall have requirements on the use by clients of accredited bodies, i.e users of accredited services, of its mark, name or reference to the accreditation delivered under its scheme.

Rules shall define on which documents the mark may be displayed : letterheads, promotional materials, ...

6.1 Users of accredited management system certification

Use of the mark shall be strictly limited to the activity certified by the certification body under its accreditation. The mark shall be displayed only in combination with the certification body's logo.

When a certification body certifies a laboratory's quality system, be it accredited or not, it shall not enable the laboratory to use its mark on testing/inspection reports or calibration certificates as such reports/certificates are considered as products in this context.

Reference to accreditation through management system certification shall not infer any accredited product certification. The certified body shall not affix the mark on the products or any of their packages.

Likewise, in case of management system certification in the field of the services, the mark shall not be used on any related product.

6.2 Users of accredited product certification

The use of the mark on products shall be optional. If such an option exists, the AB shall set out a clear policy and adequate rules for the certified organisations.

In particular, the mark **shall** then be affixed on the product itself or its related packaging and must be in combination with the certification body's logo.

6.3 Users of an accredited laboratory's services

Rules shall also address such a use by clients of accredited laboratories. In particular, the rules shall specify the conditions under which test/calibration reports may be reproduced or integrated in the client's promotional documents.

Clients of accredited laboratories should be allowed to reproduce calibration certificates or tests reports partly only with prior permission of the issuing laboratory.

7 MISUSE

The AB shall have a clear policy as well as procedures describing the measures to be taken in case of misuse of its mark or name, or false or misleading reference to accreditation by an accredited body or any other party.

The AB shall provide for sanctions whenever improper use or reference to accreditation is evidenced. In some situations legal sanctions under copyright or fair trading laws may be considered.

False trade description

Under false trade description the AB is entitled to turn to the appropriate public authority with a request of investigation and, where relevant, prosecution, be it issue of false information on the AB's own mark or that of another AB located abroad.