



ARAC Report to the APAC General Assembly meeting 21st June 2019, Singapore

1. ARAC membership and MLA Signatories

1.1 ARAC membership:

ARAC includes 17 members (12 Full members and 5 associates) covering 17 Arab countries (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates & Yemen).

ARAC encourages and welcomes the stakeholders such as associations of accredited conformity assessment bodies from the Arab region to join ARAC which allows to respond to the needs of both industry and regulators with the aim to ensure consistency and equal reliability among all accredited activities delivered under their jurisdiction to ensure that the 'Global Acceptance' of accredited conformity assessment results is universally achieved.

1.2 ARAC MLA Signatories :

There has been a substantial growth in the ARAC MLA signatories, new members have joined and extended their MLA:

- GCC Accreditation Center GAC became ARAC MLA Signatory in the following fields:
 - Accreditation of calibration laboratories according to ISO/IEC 17025
 - Accreditation of inspection bodies according to ISO/IEC 17020
- The Emirates International Accreditation Centre EIAC became ARAC MLA Signatory in the field of Accreditation of FSMS Certification Bodies according to ISO/IEC 17021-1 and ISO TS 22003.

The ARAC MLA signatories are the following:

ARAC AB Signatory	Calibration	Testing	Medical	Inspection	QMS	EMS	FSMS	Product
EGAC	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
EIAC	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
GAC	Y			Y				
JAS-AU	Y	Y	Y					

2. ARAC meetings:

2.1 ARAC Annual meetings

After much planning, a successful ARAC Annual meetings were held in Amman, Jordan from 10 to 18 September 2018 hosted by the Jordanian Accreditation System, Accreditation Unit JAS-AU.

More than 60 participants from the Arab Accreditation Bodies took part in these meetings. It was also pleasing to welcome delegates from other regional cooperation bodies and stakeholders such as the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization [AIDMO]. In addition, ARAC was honored by the statement of H.E. Dr. Tariq Hammouri, Ministry of Industry and Trade in Jordan, during the celebration ceremony on the international recognition of the Multilateral Recognition Arrangements [ARAC MLA] by the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation [ILAC] and the International Accreditation Forum [IAF]. This big achievement is considered as an important milestone for supporting Arab countries to facilitate trade, enhance health & safety, protect the environment, and provide consumer protection.

The program included a Regional workshops and committees and GA meetings. A wide range of issues, which focused on the preparation for the transition to the new versions of the standards ISO/IEC 17011 and ISO/IEC 17025 were discussed and successfully achieved.

During the 6th ARAC General Assembly meeting a new ARAC Chair has been elected, Ms Amina Ahmed Mohamed, CEO of the Emirates International Accreditation centre [EIAC], UAE

In addition, the election of the Vice Chair, Committees Chairs and the Executive Committee members positions has been made and the results of the elections were the following:

- Mr Moteb Al Mazzani from GCC Accreditation centre [GAC], GCC Countries, elected as ARAC Vice Chair,
- Ms Lana Marashdeh from the Jordanian Accreditation System, Accreditation Unit [JAS-AU], Jordan, elected as ARAC MLA Committee and MLA Group Chair,
- Mr Talal Harafsheh from the Jordanian Accreditation System, Accreditation Unit [JAS-AU], Jordan, elected as ARAC Technical Committee Chair,
- Mr Brahim Houla from GCC Accreditation centre [GAC], GCC Countries, elected as Communication and Marketing Committee Chair,

Congratulations to them and our best wishes for a successful mandates !

These meetings were achieved with fruitful results especially in terms of :

- Decision on the new MLA Signatories,
- Approval of ARAC ISO/IEC 17011:2017 transition policy;
- Review of the ARAC documents namely the Executive committee terms of reference,
- Review of the ARAC action plan to ensure a successful transition to the new version of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 and ILAC&IAF A1 and A2 documents,

During these meetings, three Regional workshops were organized for the ARAC committees members:

- Workshop on the new version of ISO/IEC 17025:2017
- Workshop on independence and impartiality: accreditation of inspection bodies according to ISO/IEC 17020
- Workshop on impartiality and consultancy: accreditation of product certification bodies according to ISO/IEC 17065.

2.2 ARAC Mid-Term meetings:

ARAC Mid-Term meetings were held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 3rd to 7th March 2019 hosted by the Emirates International Accreditation Centre EIAC .

The meetings brought together more than 35 participants from ARAC Committees Chairs, Members, EIAC and UNIDO representatives. On the margin of these meetings, a Regional Training Workshop for the ARAC Peer Evaluators on the implementation of the new version of the standard ISO/IEC 17025:2017 and ILAC requirements was conducted on 3rd-4th March 2019.

During these meetings, the ARAC Committees discussed a wide range of issues, mainly:

- Extension of the ARAC MLA scope to cover the Accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies certifying the competence of persons;
- Different options and scenarios for ensuring ARAC financial sustainability;
- Hosting ARAC Secretariat & registration as a legal entity;
- Establishment of new ARAC Working & Task Force Groups (e.g. Capacity Building and Proficiency Testing Groups);

- Launching of the first ARAC Proficiency Testing programs;
- Preparation for ARAC upcoming Peer evaluation that will be conducted by IAF and ILAC.

3. Celebration of the World Accreditation day 2019

During its 11th meeting held on 5th and 6th Mach 2019, the Communication and Marketing Committee translated the IAF&ILAC World Accreditation Day 2019 video into Arabic language under the title “Accreditation: Adding Value to Supply Chains”.

ARAC Chair speech, the translated video with the WAD 2019 support documents have been provided to all ARAC members in order to use them for celebrating IAF & ILAC WAD 2019.

4. ARAC Regional Workshops:

4.1 ARAC Regional Workshop on IAF MD 20:

The training workshop on the IAF Mandatory Document IAF MD 20 “Generic Competence for Accreditation Bodies Assessors: Application to ISO/IEC 17011” was held from 29 to 31 July 2018 in Cairo, Egypt. The training which was attended by the ARAC Peer Evaluators and AB representatives and was very ably facilitated by Dr. Cynthia D Woodley.

The objective of this Regional Workshop is to harmonize the understanding and the implementation of the new IAF Mandatory Documents, especially the following:

- What ARAC Peer evaluators have to expect as proof of implementation of IAF MD 20 from an AB under peer evaluations, and what is considered the minimum of "evaluation records" to be kept.
- How much time could be assigned in the Peer Evaluation format according to IAF/ILAC A2 (usually Peer Evaluation of an AB within a week on-site) for evaluating competence requirements according to IAF MD 20.
- In-depth discussions on requirements of IAF MD 20 with the viewpoint of what has to be demonstrated as fulfilment of the Requirements (Level B or Level B1, ... or Level B1+every aspect ...) by the Accreditation Bodies

4.2 ARAC Regional Training Workshop on ISO/IEC 17011:2017 for ARAC accreditation Bodies members representatives

ARAC organized a Regional Workshop on the new requirements of the new issue o the standard ISO/IEC 17011:2017 and the applicable ILA&IAF A series Documents for the ARAC Accreditation Bodies representatives. This regional workshop organized in the margin of the ARAC 6th Annual meetings during the period 14th – 15th September 2018 in Amman, Jordan.

30 ARAC accreditation bodies’ staff members from fifteen Arab Accreditation Bodies participated at the training workshop which was very skillfully facilitated by Ms Roxanne Robinson. During this workshop it was focused also on risk analysis and the ILAC&IAF requirements

4.3 ARAC Peer Evaluators Workshop on the new version of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 and ILAC&IAF A applicable A series documents

In the margin of its 6th Annual meeting, ARAC organized a workshop for the ARAC Experienced and trainees Peer Evaluators during the period 16-18 September 2018. The purpose of this workshop was:

- ISO/IEC 17011 (2017) training course
- writing findings to the new ISO/IEC 17011
- a look at the latest IAF/ILAC A1, A2 AND A3
- lessons learned from the IAF&ILAC evaluation of ARAC

More than 15 ARAC qualified and trainee Peer evaluators participated at this workshop, which was very ably facilitated by Ms Roxanne Robinson.

4.4 ARAC regional Workshop on the new version of the standard ISO/IEC 17025:

More than 20 lead assessors and technical assessors from the Arab Accreditation Cooperation [ARAC] Accreditation Bodies participated at the ARAC Regional Workshop on the implementation of the new version of the standard ISO/IEC 17025: 2017 “General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories” in Kuwait, State of Kuwait during the period 28-31 January 2019.

This Regional Workshop comes within the framework of the fulfilment of ARAC to the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation ILAC, especially which requires that Regional Group provides workshops following any changes made to the peer evaluation criteria, as stated in the ILAC/IAF document “IAF/ILAC A1: IAF-ILAC Multi-Lateral Mutual Recognition Arrangements (Arrangements): Requirements and Procedures for Evaluation of a Regional Group” One of the main objective of the regional training workshop is to find a common understanding about the implementation of the new/revised requirements of ISO/IEC 17025:2017 and to establish a paper which describes best practices to cover the new/revised requirements.

4.5 ARAC Regional Workshop on ISO/IEC 17025:2017 and ILAC requirements for ARAC Peer Evaluators

The ARAC Regional Workshop on the new version of ISO/IEC 17025:2017 and the applicable ILAC requirements was held on 3rd & 5th March 2019 in Dubai, UAE. The training which was attended by the ARAC qualified and trainees Peer Evaluators in the fields of testing & calibration and was very ably facilitated by Mr. Mahmoud Eltayeb.

The objective of this Regional Workshop is to harmonize the understanding and the implementation of the new version of ISO/IEC 17025:2017, especially the following:

- Describe the ISO/IEC 17025 requirements with the viewpoint of what has to be demonstrated as fulfilment of the Requirements by the Testing/calibration laboratories,
- Describe what ARAC Peer Evaluators have to expect as proof of implementation of standard requirements from the Accreditation Bodies under Peer Evaluation, especially during the witnessing of the assessments conducted by the evaluated accreditation bodies,
- Identify the amount of time to be dedicated during the witnessed assessments for each ISO/IEC 17025 requirements,
- Learned lessons from the ARAC Accreditation Bodies assessment conducted according to the new version of ISO/IEC 17025,
- Applicable ILAC requirements as described in the ILAC Policies, Rules and Guidance,
- Practical sessions and exercises based on the standards requirements.

5. ARAC Peer evaluations and participation of ARAC Peer evaluators at Regional and ILAC Peer evaluations:

5.1 ARAC Re Evaluation of the Jordanian Accreditation System JAS-AU

With the aim to maintain the ARAC MLA Signatory status of JAS-AU in the field of accreditation of Testing, Medical & Calibration laboratories, ARAC conducted during the period 1st – 6th December 2018 the ARAC Re-evaluation of JAS-AU with the participation of four ARAC Peer Evaluators.

5.2 ILAC Peer Evaluation of IAAC

One ARAC Peer Evaluators participated at the ILAC Peer Evaluation of the Regional Cooperation Bodies IAAC in December 2018 covering the activities of accreditation of Medical laboratories.

5.3 AFRAC Peer Evaluation of KENAS and SADCAS

Two ARAC Peer Evaluators participated at the AFRAC Peer Evaluation of the Kenyan Accreditation Service KENAS and the Southern African Development Community Accreditation Services SADCAS conducted in November 2018 and May

2019.

6. ARAC Cooperation with APAC

ARAC ABs accredited laboratories participating at the following APAC PT programs:

- APMP-APLAC Joint Proficiency Testing Programme (APLAC T110) Toxic Metal/Metalloid Species in Powdered Rice;
- APMP-APLAC (APLAC T109) Cadmium in Milk Powder Proficiency Testing Program:

It should be noted that the results of the participation of the ARAC ABs accredited laboratories are using in the Peer evaluation process conducted by ARAC.

ARAC wishes to extend its gratitude to APAC for this great opportunity and counting on the continuation of APAC PT activities which support the ARAC Peer Evaluation process:

In addition, ARAC and APAC will conduct a joint Peer evaluation of EIAC in November 2019 for the activities of accreditation of certification bodies.

With the aim to strengthen the APAC/ARAC cooperation and further to the MoUs signed between ARAC and APLAC & PAC, ARAC sent a proposal MoU to be signed between APAC and ARAC which is based on the following area of cooperation:

- Training and Capacity Building,
- Support on technical matters
- Peer evaluations
- Proficiency Testing Programs
- Information exchange
- Adoption of common positions

7. Upcoming ARAC key events:

7.1 Peer Evaluators Training Plan: ARAC Training Workshop on the implementation of ISO/IEC 17011:2017:

ARAC will conduct in September 2019 a Peer Evaluators workshop to compile experience with the implementation of the new/revised requirements of ISO/IEC 17011:2017.

The main objective of this workshop is to find a common understanding about the application of the new/revised requirements of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 and will be based on the IAF & ILAC workshop on the application of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 that will be held in April 2019.

7.2 ARAC Annual meetings:

The future ARAC Annual meetings will be held during the period 15-19 September 2019 in Tunis, Tunisia.

The contact details of ARAC Secretariat are:

ARAC Secretariat

Email : secretariat@arabarac.org

Tel: + 212 600 78 56 78

The new website address is: <http://www.arac-accreditation.org>