



Certified Once
Accepted Everywhere

IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) Annual Report



2016

Contents

Introduction	3
The IAF MLA	3
The IAF MLA Mark	4
Scope of the IAF MLA	4
New Scope Extensions	5
Signatories to the IAF MLA	5
New Applicants	8
Global Growth	9
Peer Evaluation Process	12
Expanding the scope of the IAF MLA	13
IAF MLA monitoring and improvement activities	14
World Accreditation Day 2016	18
Annex 1: IAF MLA Signatories and associated Scope	19

Introduction

The IAF and its accreditation body members invest significant effort and resource to maintain the integrity and consistency of the MLA 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 can have confidence in the Arrangement.

The IAF MLA

The purpose of the IAF MLA is to provide users, in countries with accreditation bodies that are IAF MLA signatories', assurance that equivalent certification and verification bodies in other countries operate to the same standard as those in their own country.

Accreditations granted by IAF MLA accreditation body signatories are recognised worldwide based on their equivalent accreditation programmes, therefore reducing costs and adding value to industry and consumers.

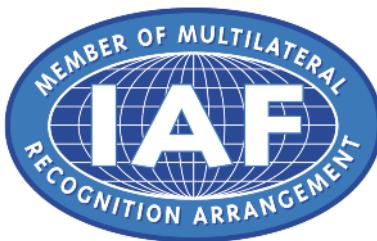
Certificates in the fields of management systems, products (including services and processes), personnel, verification and other similar programmes of conformity assessment issued by bodies accredited by IAF MLA signatories are therefore relied upon in international trade.

The MLA contributes to the freedom of world trade by eliminating technical barriers. IAF works to find the most effective way of achieving a single system to meet the objective:

"Certified once, accepted everywhere"

The IAF MLA Mark

The IAF MLA Mark can be used by accreditation bodies to demonstrate their status as a signatory to the IAF MLA. If approved by the Accreditation Body accredited certification bodies can also use the Mark in combination with the accreditation symbol to use on their certificates providing the certificates are issued in association with an IAF MLA scope or endorsed scheme.



The Mark demonstrates that the certificate has been issued by a Certification Body that is accredited by an IAF MLA signatory and is thus traceable to the highest authority. It is an assurance that the certificate and the issuing body are of a high standard of competence and may be trusted, as they are recognised as complying with the same set of standards at the global level.

Scope of the IAF MLA

The IAF MLA is currently comprised of accreditation for the following scopes:

1) Main Scope: Certification Bodies of Management Systems:

Sub Scopes:

- a. **ISO 9001 – Quality Management Systems** – Requirements and ISO/IEC TS 17021-3 – Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems – Part 3: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of quality management systems
- b. **ISO 14001 – Environmental Management Systems** – Requirements with guidance for use, and ISO/IEC TS 17021-2 – Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems – Part 3: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of environmental management systems
- c. **ISO 13485:2012 – Medical Devices** – Quality management systems – Requirements for regulatory purposes
- d. **ISO/TS 22003:2007 – Food Safety Systems** – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of food safety management systems and ISO 22000 – Food safety management systems – Requirements for any organization in the food chain
- e. **ISO/IEC 27006:2011 – Information Technology** – Security techniques – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of information security management systems and ISO 27001 Information technology – Security techniques – Information security management systems – Requirements
- f. **ISO/TS 50003 Energy Management Systems** – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of energy management systems as level 4 and ISO 50001:2011 Energy management systems – Requirements with guidance as Level 5.

2) Main Scope: Certification Bodies for Products processes and services

Sub Scope:

GLOBALG.A.P. Integrated Farm Assurance General Requirements and GLOBALG.A.P. IFA Control Points and Compliance Criteria

3) Main Scope: Certification Bodies for Persons

Sub Scope:

None

4) Main Scope: Validation and Verification Bodies of Greenhouse Gases

Sub Scope:

None

Certificates based on a main scope are 'equally reliable' because the conformity assessment bodies conform to the same standard.

Certificates based on a sub-scope are considered 'equivalent' if they are based on the same IAF endorsed standard.

New Scope Extensions

In 2016 the IAF extended its MLA to the sub scope Energy Management Systems conforming to ISO 50001 and ISO/TS 50003.

Signatories to the IAF MLA

The IAF MLA has been structured to build on existing and developing regional MLAs established around the world. Therefore, IAF has granted Special Recognition to the MLA programs of three Regional Accreditation Groups, the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA), the Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (PAC) and the InterAmerican Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC), on the basis of the acceptance of the mutual recognition arrangements established within these organisations.

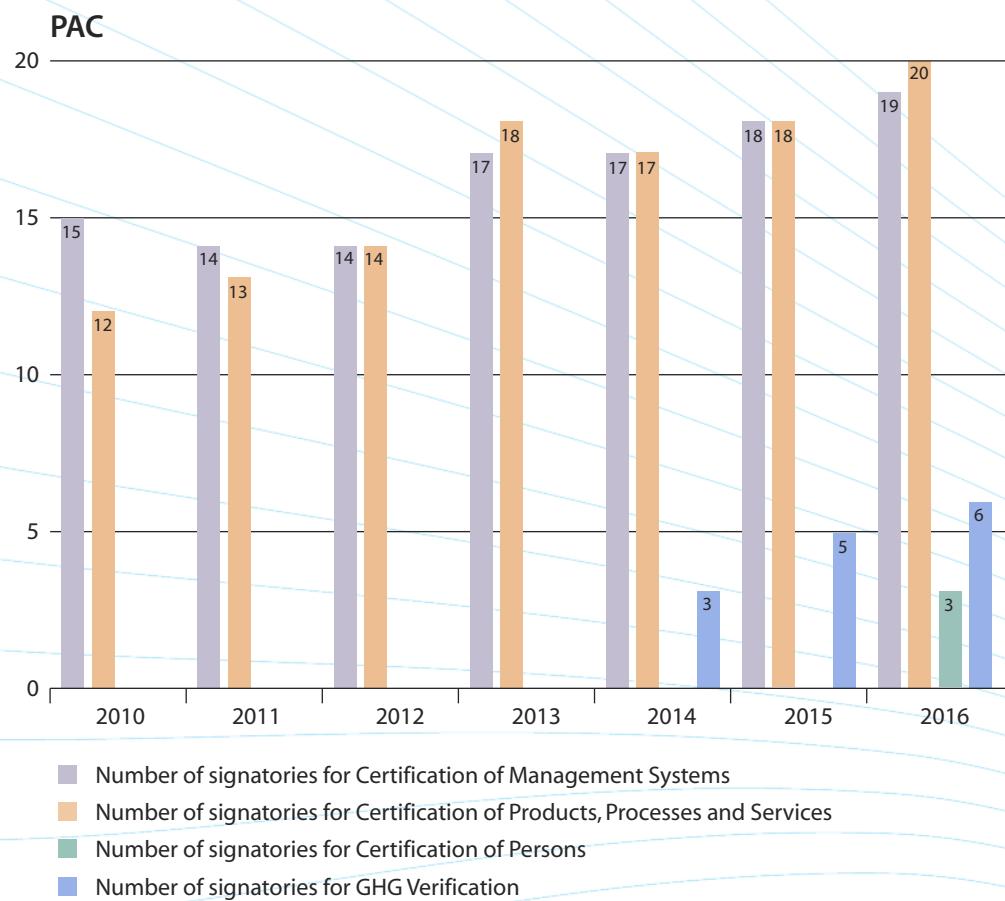
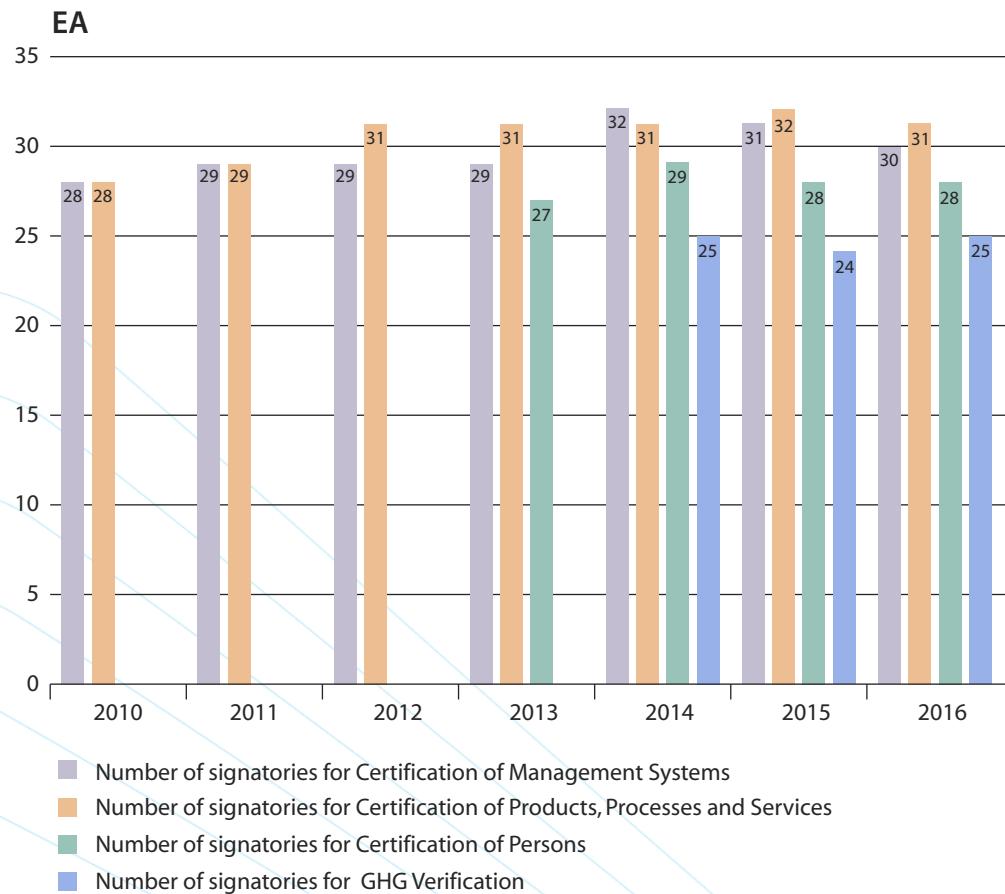
Membership of the IAF MLA is recognised as being satisfied by membership of either the EA MLA, the PAC MLA or the IAAC MLA for recognised programs. IAF members who are also signatories of these regional MLAs can be accepted into the IAF MLA for recognised programs.

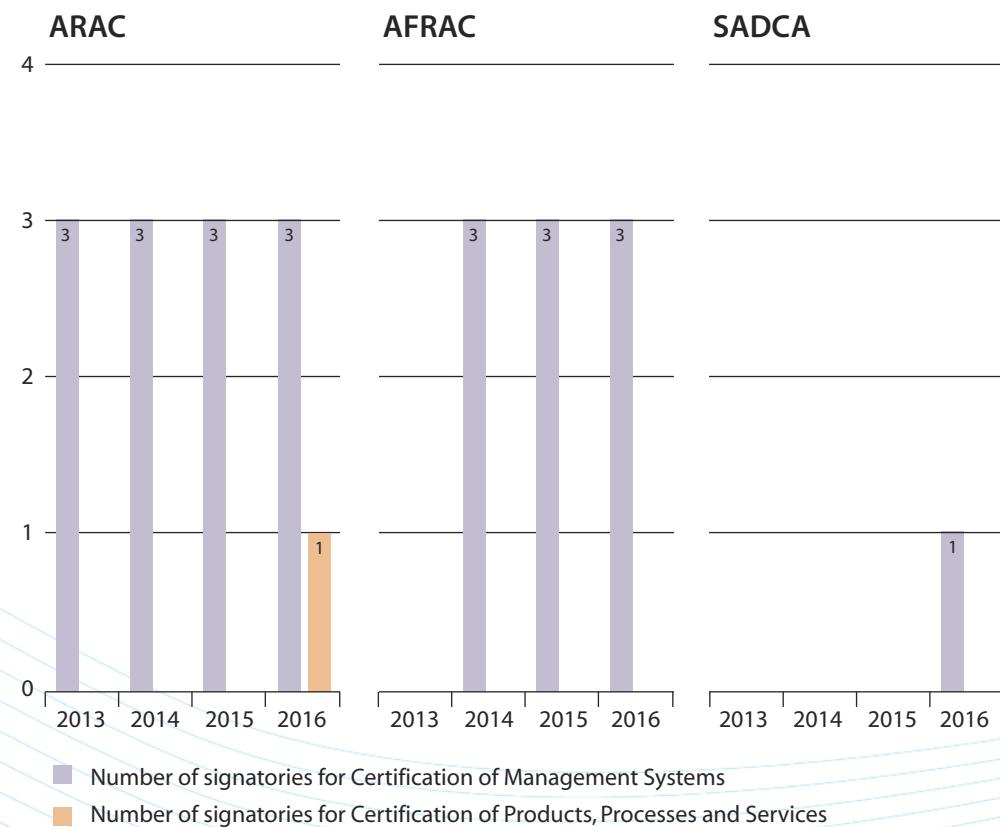
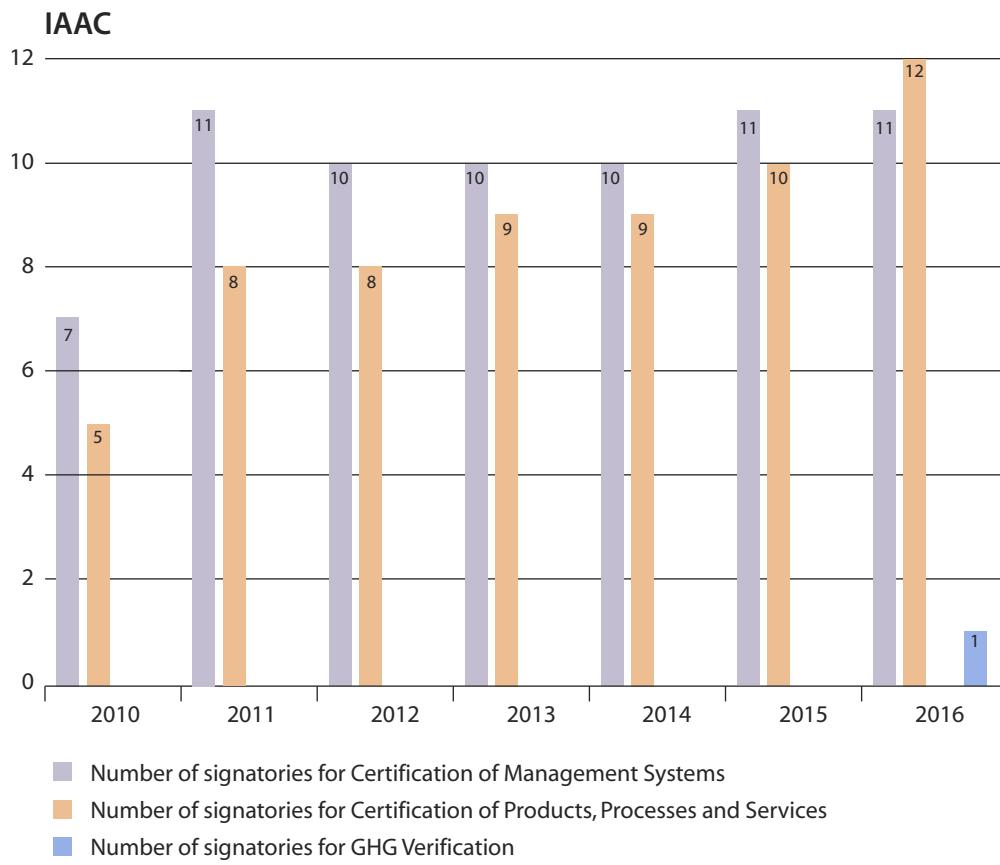
Another three Regional Accreditation Groups have been working on establishing their MLAs and two are undergoing peer evaluations for Special Recognition of their MLA programs. In recognition of this, ARAB Accreditation Cooperation, (ARAC), African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC) and Southern African Development Community in Accreditation (SADCA) have been included in this report.

There are a small number of IAF Member accreditation bodies that are not a member of a Regional Accreditation Group referred to as "unaffiliated" accreditation bodies. Unaffiliated accreditation bodies have applied directly to IAF to become an IAF MLA signatory.

The number of signatories to the IAF MLA has grown in recent years, providing confidence to businesses and Regulators in a greater number of economies. A full list of IAF MLA signatories as of December 2016 is at Annex 1.

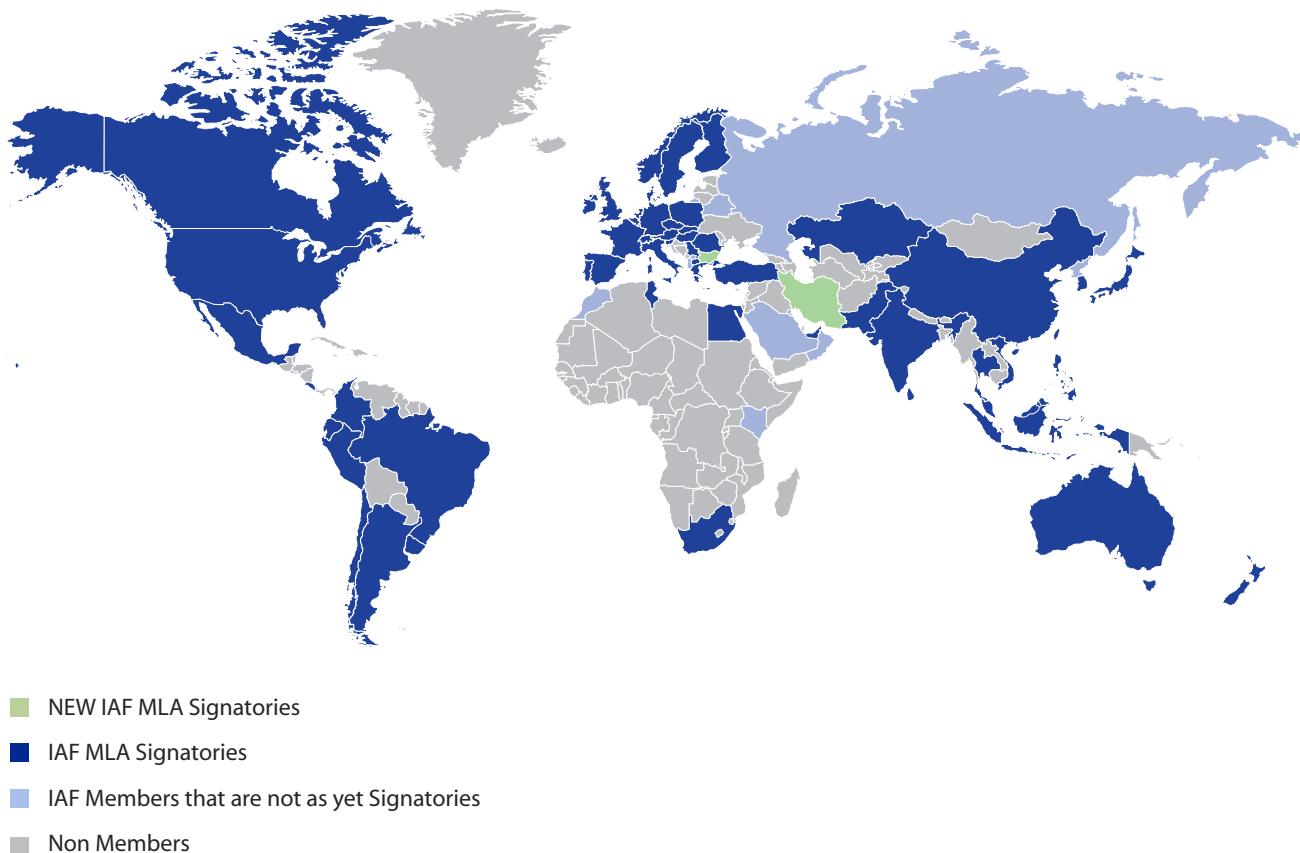
Signatories to the IAF MLA





Note: Not all signatories to Regional MLAs have applied to become a signatory of the IAF MLA.

In 2016 the IAF MLA comprised 3 Recognised Regional Accreditation Groups and 63 accreditation bodies in total representing 58 economies. Two of the 63 signatories are unaffiliated accreditation bodies.



New Applicants

Further growth in the number of signatories is expected in the future as 3 applications from Accreditation bodies were received in 2016.

EA: 1 new application, ARMNAB, Armenia applied for EA membership.

PAC: 7 applications, including 3 applications for extensions of Management Systems MLA, 1 application for Product and 3 applications for Persons MLA.

IAAC: 2 new applicants for Persons, 1 new applicant for FSMS and 1 new applicant for MDMS.

ARAC: In 2016, two applications were received from ALGERAC, Algeria and IQAS, Iraq to join the ARAC MLA.

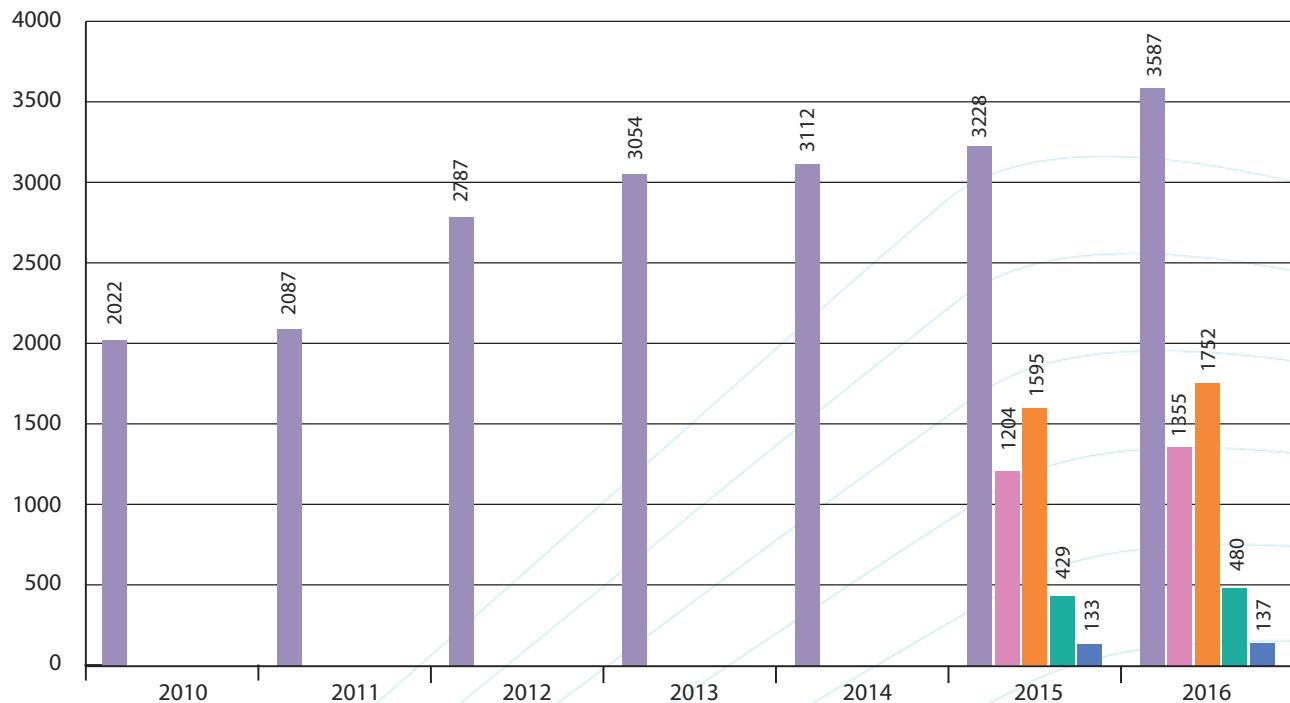
AFRAC: 1 application for Management Systems Certification (QMS, EMS and FSMS).

SADCA: No applications

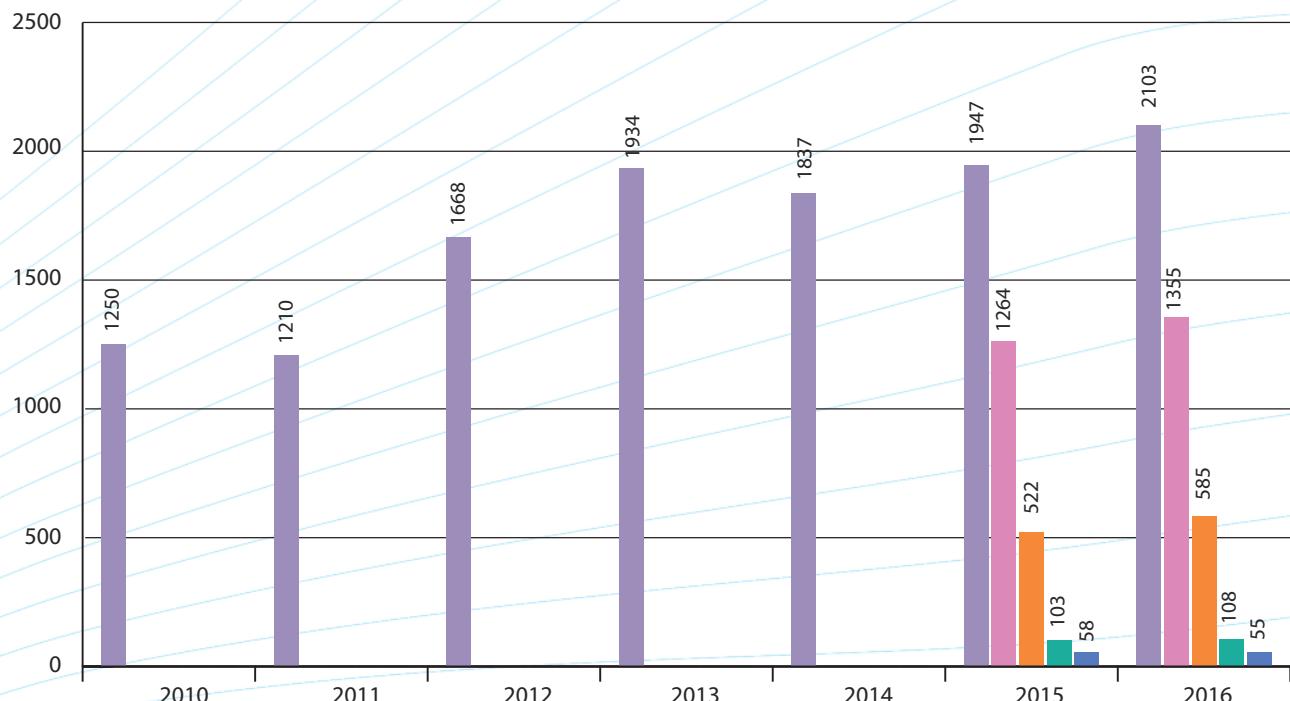
Global Growth

In addition to the growth in signatories to the IAF MLA, there has been a corresponding growth in the number of accredited certification bodies.

EA



PAC

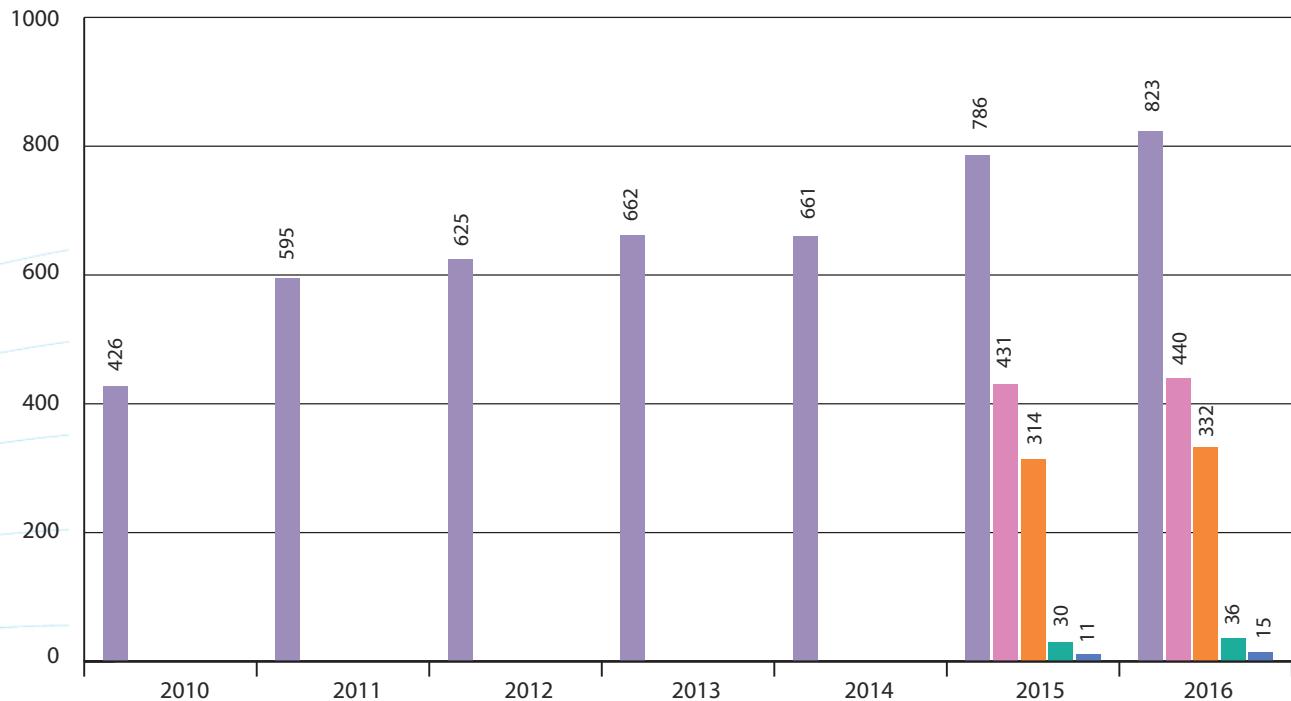


- Number of accredited Certification Bodies
- Number of Management System CB's
- Number of Product CB's

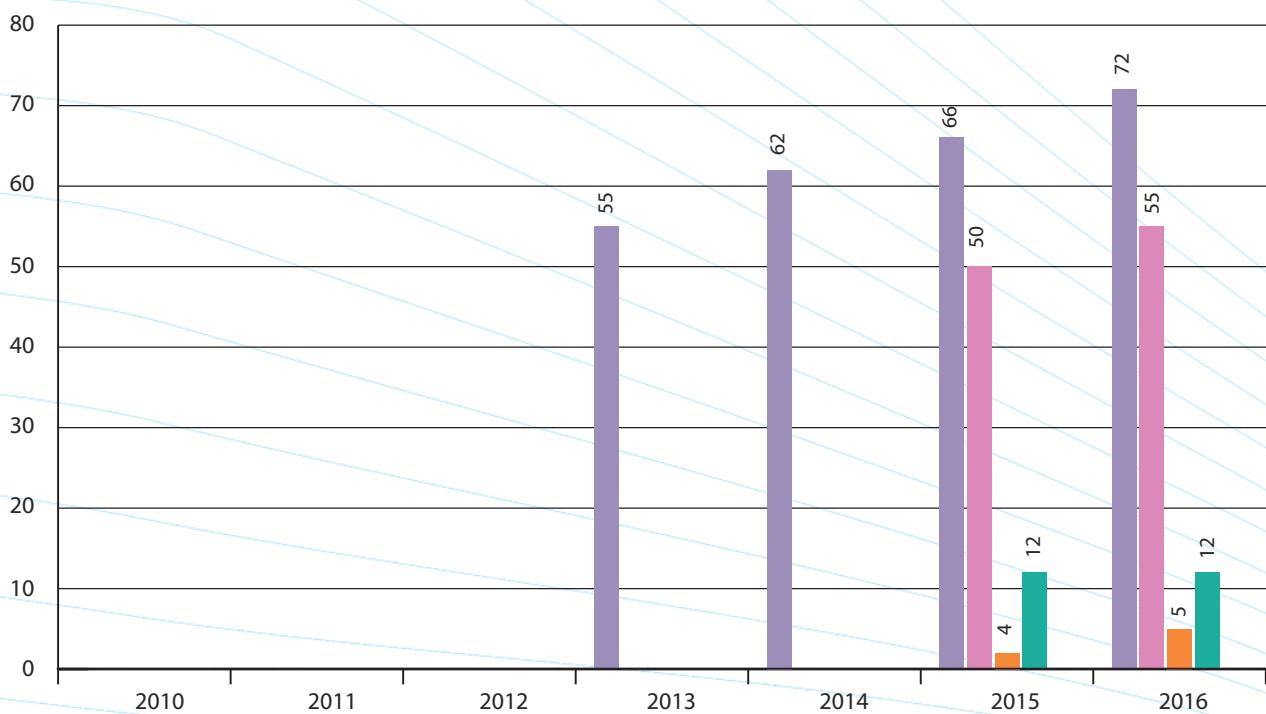
- Number of Person CB'S
- Number of accredited verification bodies

Global Growth continued

IAAC



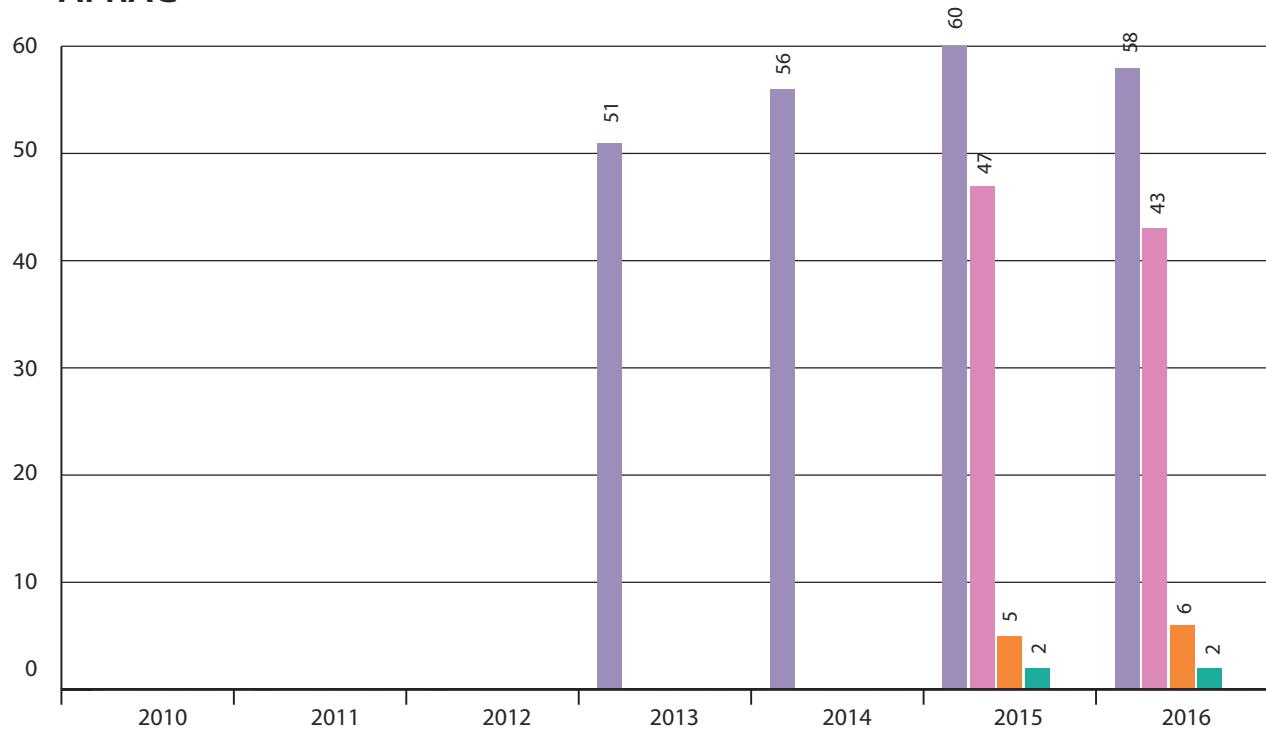
ARAC



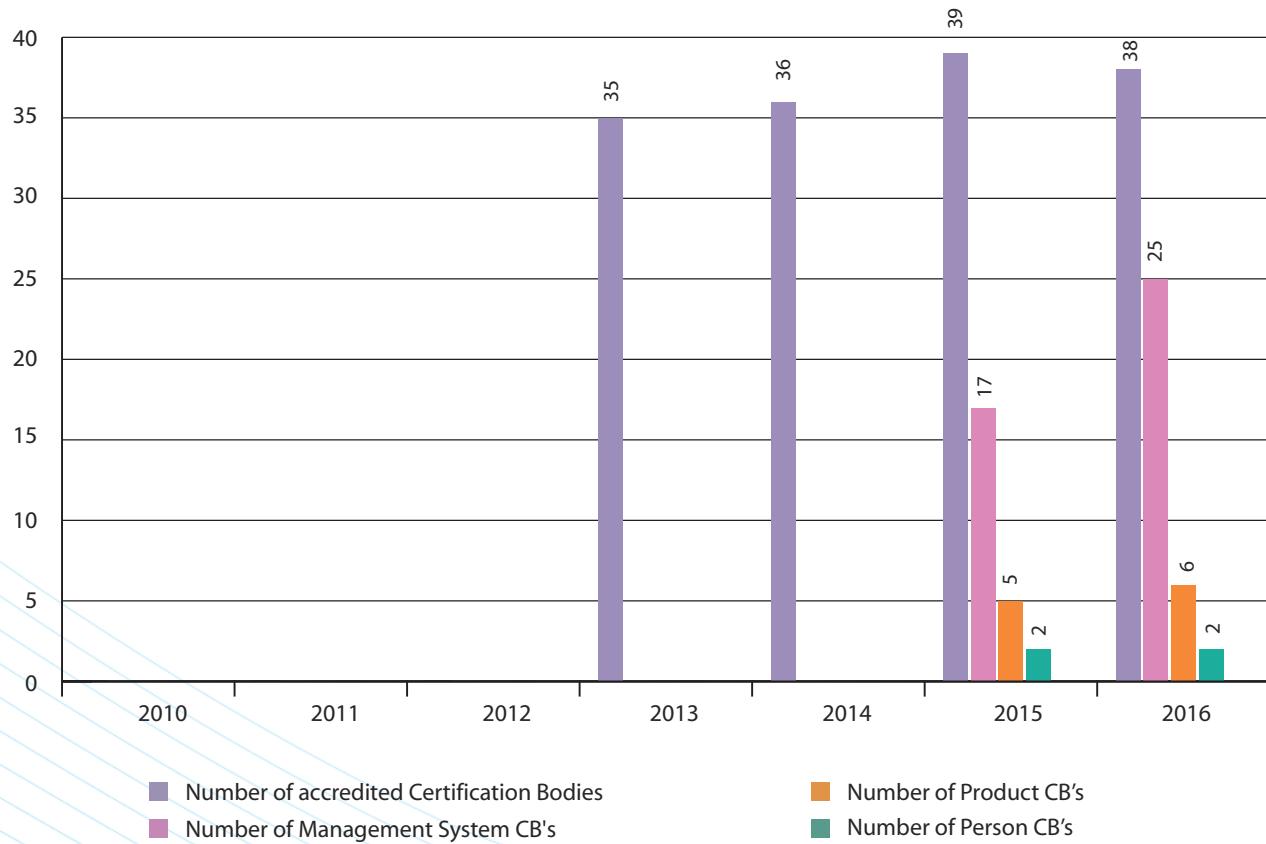
- Number of accredited Certification Bodies
- Number of Management System CB's
- Number of Product CB's

- Number of Person CB's
- Number of accredited verification bodies

AFRAC



SADCA



A total of 6,681 certification bodies are currently accredited, an increase of 9% since 2015.

Note: These numbers reflect the total number of sub-s scopes covered by accredited certification bodies in the Regional Groups, including where a certification body is accredited for more than one sub-s scope.

Peer Evaluation Process

Accreditation bodies are admitted to the IAF MLA only after a most stringent evaluation of their operations by a peer evaluation team which is charged to ensure that the applicant member complies fully with both the international standards and IAF requirements.

IAF, and its accreditation body members, invest significant cost and resource to ensure they maintain the integrity of the MLA through robust peer evaluation. The MLA and its signatories are under constant review. The peer evaluation process is ongoing and extensive, covering all economies on a regular programme.

The following table provides an overview of the evaluations conducted in 2016:

	IAF	EA	PAC	IAAC	ARAC	AFRAC	SADCA
Reviewed reports	2 Regional Bodies 2 Accreditation Bodies	8 Accreditation Bodies:	15 Accreditation Bodies	4 Accreditation Bodies	3 Accreditation Bodies	2 Accreditation Bodies	0 Accreditation Bodies
Extraordinary evaluations	Nil	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total Man-days of evaluation effort	240	138	750	220	80	59	0

In addition, the following number of peer evaluations are in progress or planned for 2017.

IAF: 2 Regional Groups and 1 unaffiliated accreditation body

EA: 11 accreditation bodies (re-evaluation) + 6 scope extensions + 1 pre-evaluation, 4 initial evaluations and 2 extraordinary evaluations

PAC: 15 accreditation bodies + 7 scope extensions

IAAC: 6 accreditation bodies + 3 scope extensions (2 for FSMS and 1 for MDMS).

ARAC: 3 accreditation bodies + 1 scope extension

- One evaluation for QMS & EMS
- One re-evaluation for QMS & EMS & FSMS
- One scope extension for FSMS

AFRAC: 3 accreditation bodies (QMS & EMS), including 3 scope extensions (FSMS)

SADCA: 1 accreditation body (QMS, EMS)

Expanding the scope of the IAF MLA

The IAF MLA is under constant review to better serve the needs of stakeholders.

At the global level, the IAF:

- continued to liaise with the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) to recognise the GFSI benchmarking process and to facilitate the acceptance of GFSI benchmarked schemes as sub-scopes under the IAF MLA,
- continued work on the IAF MLA scope extension of the IPC private sector scheme "IPC Management System Auditors" and
- started the evaluation of the IAF MLA scope extension to the FAMI-QS private sector scheme "FAMI-QS The Quality and Safety System of Specialty Feed Ingredients".

The Regions are also extending their scopes to broaden the reach and value of the IAF MLA.

Regional developments that took place in 2016 include:

Region	Development
EA	In November 2016, the IAF General Assembly in New Delhi noted the MLA scope extension of EA, for Certification of persons – ISO/IEC 17024.
PAC	Applied for the extension of IAF MLA to GHG and Persons.
IAAC	IAAC submitted an application to IAF to extend its MLA recognition to include the scopes of Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS), Information Security Management Systems (ISMS) and Medical Device Management Systems (MDMS) Certification Bodies.
ARAC	Currently operates in the MLA Scope: QMS, EMS, FSMS and product.
AFRAC	AFRAC's scope was extended to include FSMS. 3 AB's are expected to apply for extension of this scope in 2017.
SADCA	No extension of scopes in 2016

MLA monitoring and improvement activities

IAF is committed to monitoring and reviewing the MLA to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of stakeholders. In addition to consulting widely with stakeholders, IAF carries out a number of programmes and activities to continuously improve the value and effectiveness of the MLA.

Feedback

Complaints provide a valuable mechanism for receiving feedback relating to the effectiveness of the MLA. This often confirms that the MLA is working effectively and that the process in place is suitably robust. It can also provide information that can be used to improve areas of the MLA. The following numbers of complaints were raised during this period:

- **IAF:** One complaint was referred to the MLA Management Committee in 2016.
- **EA:** In 2016, EA received and managed 5 new complaints. All 5 complaints have been closed by end of 2016. Out of the 5 complaints, 2 were referred to IAF. Two other complaints which started before 2016 remained open at the end of 2016. One appeal against a MAC decision was received, managed and closed in 2016.
- **PAC:** PAC received 5 items of feedback, one of which is currently being dealt with as a complaint. No appeals were received in 2016.
- **IAAC:** IAAC received 1 appeal and 3 complaints in 2016, all of which were addressed and closed.
- **ARAC:** No complaints or appeals received
- **AFRAC:** No complaints or appeals received
- **SADCA:** No complaints or appeals received

Continuous improvement

IAF consults widely with stakeholders in developing accreditation programs, and it works to deliver the best standard of conformity assessment in order to provide stakeholders with a value added outcome. The following activities were carried out to improve the MLA:

IAF:

Revision of IAF ML 2:2016 General Principles on the Use of the IAF MLA Mark and IAF ML 4:2016 Policies and Procedures for a MLA on the Level of Single Accreditation Bodies and on the Level of Regional Accreditation Groups

EA:

- At the peer-evaluation system level, it is an established practice that, for each peer evaluation, one Management Group member is appointed to monitor the process in cooperation with the Secretary. The role of the appointed MAC MG member has been highlighted and the list of appointments is now made available on a continuous basis.

- In response to a finding by the ILAC/IAF team, the EA Articles of Association were reviewed, as well as the EA Terms of Reference in order to allow bilateral agreement signatories to have a voting right in the MAC for decisions related to signatories. The MAC Terms of Reference as well were revised to reflect the change
- The process for the management of transitions of standards and ILAC/IAF documents has been established and documented. Online surveys are carried out to collect data on how signatories manage transition. The results are reviewed by the MG which may subsequently submit recommendations to the MAC.
- The template for surveys of members was improved, and a process for dealing with the results by seeking further information or action from members, where relevant, is being documented. The complete set of rules will be completed in 2017 and eventually published as a supplement to EA-2/02 (see further section Management system).
- Likewise, the process for dealing with changes notified by members was improved. Classification of changes by degree of criticality, as well as development of a template to be used for review and decision during MAC meetings, were discussed with the MG. This should also be completed and published as another supplement to EA-2/02. In practice, changes are notified to the Secretariat for review, first by the MG who prepares a recommendation on any needed action from the NAB to be approved by the MAC. A table which describes the change(s) and the recommendation by the MG is compiled for presentation at the MAC meeting.
- A list of publications for use by EA evaluators is now given in EA-INF/01 List of EA publications and international documents.
- Started in 2014, the benchmarking table is now regularly reviewed and improved by the MG. The table gives, on an anonymous basis, a list of findings resulting from EA evaluations. The MG agreed that, after each MAC meeting, MG members would be appointed to review the reports and update the table. It has been recognised indeed that the table will also be a valuable training tool at the NAB level.
- Started in 2016, the re-engineering project is ongoing. The MAC Chair made a presentation of the results of the extensive survey carried out within the MAC. The objective of the survey, which was followed by a workshop session held in April 2016 in Riga, was to collect MAC members' and evaluators' feedback on how to improve the EA peer-evaluation process. MAC members will be invited to discuss proposals prepared by the MAC Management Group in advance of the spring 2017 MAC meeting. The project will also be further developed in the light of the EA Strategy 2025 agreed in November 2016 by the EA General Assembly.

PAC:

- Completed the 2016 internal audit and closed out all observations and nonconformities. PAC members discussed various issues in relation to the implementation of the MLA and presented views in various IAF groups.

IAAC:

- Regularly reviews the IAAC Strategic Plan indicators to ensure that it meets its annual objectives.
- Created a new Peer Evaluators Management Subcommittee (PEMS), which reports to the MLA

IAF MLA monitoring and improvement activities

Committee and was created in response to the increased work load regarding selection, qualification and monitoring of IAAC peer evaluators.

- Developed indicators related to the number of peer evaluators provided by Accreditation Body members to ensure a balanced contribution by all members to the regional peer evaluation process.
- Carried out a review and improvement of the IAAC peer evaluation process for Management Systems sub-scopes.

ARAC:

- Survey on the implementation of ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015, ISO/IEC 17021-2:2016 and the IAF Mandatory Documents:

With the aim to follow-up with ARAC Accreditation Bodies members, especially the signatories, on the implementation of the new standards and the applicable IAF Mandatory Documents and to ensure the monitoring of the progress of their preparation to be aligned with the new requirements, ARAC secretariat conducted in 2016 a survey on the implementation of select requirements documents.

AFRAC:

- Revision of 9 AFRAC MRA documents, and publication of 10 new AFRAC MRA documents
- Qualification of 1 evaluator as Team Leader, and qualification of 1 new evaluator

SADCA:

Publication of A016-01 Technical Cooperation Agreement between AFRAC, SADCA and ARAC.

Training

A number of training sessions, seminars and workshops took place during the period to extend the knowledge base, share best practice, and to maintain the competence of peer evaluators and assessment personnel.

IAF:

Workshop on IAF Competence of AB Assessors held during the meetings in New Delhi October 2016.

EA:

A training workshop on ISO/IEC 17043 was held in February 2016 in Staines-upon-Thames, England; 23 participants attended.

- A training workshop for newcomer/potential evaluators was held in June 2016 in Utrecht, Netherlands; 28 participants attended.
- A refresher training on ISO/IEC 17020 & ISO 17065 for team members was held in December 2016 in Paris, France; 15 participants attended.

IAF MLA monitoring and improvement activities

PAC:

Undertook two training programs, supported by PTB (Germany) on ISO/IEC 17065. One was an introductory training for AB and CBs hosted by CANC (Cambodia) and a second event for experienced ISO/IEC 17065 was hosted by ANSI (United States of America). Both events took place in October 2016. There was also a workshop in June for experienced peer evaluators, and a training session for new peer evaluators immediately before the IAF meetings in New Delhi in October 2016.

IAAC:

IAAC held a training workshop for new peer evaluators in Santiago, Chile, in July 2016. 17 participants were qualified as trainee peer evaluators and are scheduled to be assigned to upcoming peer evaluations in the region

ARAC:

The 2nd ARAC MLA workshop held on 8th February 2016, Tunis, Tunisia, for the ARAC MLA Committee members and Peer evaluators.

ARAC organized a Regional Workshop on ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 and the applicable IAF Mandatory Documents for its Peer evaluators qualified for the evaluation of the Accreditation Bodies of Management System Certification Bodies and the ARAC Accreditation Body members Lead Assessors (Qualified for assessment of MSCB) during the period 31st May–2nd June 2016 in Tunis, Tunisia. Sixteen ARAC Peer evaluators and ARAC AB Lead Assessors from eight Arab Accreditation Bodies participated at the training workshop

ARAC conducted its 2nd Peer evaluators training course during the period 14th–16th November 2016 in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman. The aim of this training course was to enlarge future teams of ARAC peer-evaluators with a view to improve ARAC peer-evaluation activities. The training targeted potential ARAC peer-evaluators from the lead assessors of ARAC Accreditation Body Members.

AFRAC:

No training or workshops in 2016.

SADCA:

No training or workshops in 2016.

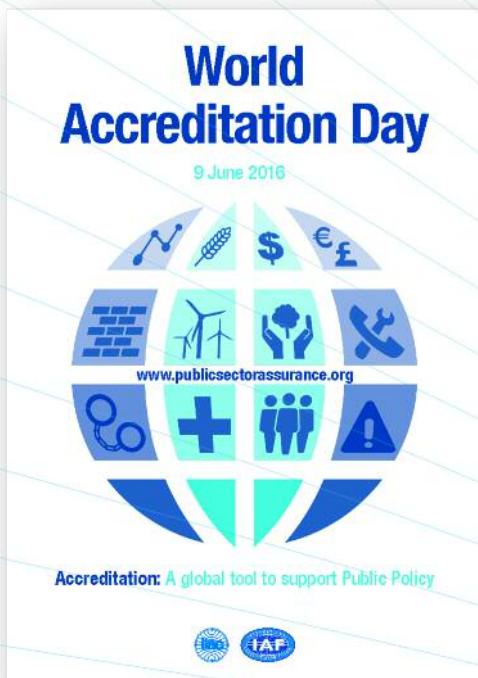
World Accreditation Day 2016

On June 9th, World Accreditation Day is celebrated as a global initiative to raise awareness of the value that accreditation plays in facilitating global trade, and 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.

To help explain the use of accredited conformity assessment, the Public Sector Assurance website www.publicsectorassurance.org has been established to showcase different global examples where accreditation has been used to support public policy efforts.



Annex 1: New IAF MLA Signatories, New Regional MLA Scope Extensions and New AB MLA Scope Extensions

To refer to the full list of signatories and scopes please visit the IAF website

New IAF MLA Signatories:

EA-BAS: Bulgaria

Main scopes:

Management system certification – ISO/IEC 17021-1

Product certification – ISO/IEC 17065 – 24 Feb 2017

Certifications of persons – ISO/IEC 17024 – 20 Oct 2016

Sub-Sscopes:

Level 4: None

Level 5: MS:ISO 9001 – 24 Feb 2017

MS:ISO 14001 – 24 Feb 2017

NACI: Iran

Main Scope:

Management system certification – ISO/IEC 17021-1

Sub-Sscopes:

Level 4: MS:ISO/TS 22003 – 19 Jul 2017

Level 5: MS:ISO 9001 – 24 Oct 2016

MS:ISO 14001 – 19 Jul 2017

MS:ISO 22000 – 19 Jul 2017

New Regional MLA Scope Extensions:

EA: Europe

Main Scope:

Certification of Persons – ISO/IEC 17024

New AB MLA Scope Extensions:

AA: Austria, **ACCREDIA:** Italy, **ATS:** Serbia, **BELAC:** Belgium, **CAI:** Czech Republic,

COFRAC: France, **DAKkS:** Germany, **DANAK:** Denmark, **ENAC:** Spain, **ESYD:** Greece,

FINAS: Finland, **IPAC:** Portugal, **NA:** Norway, **PCA:** Poland, **RENAR:** Romania, **RvA:** Netherlands,

SA: Slovenia, **SAS:** Switzerland, **SNAS:** Slovakia, **SWEDAC:** Sweden, **TURKAK:** Turkey,

UKAS: United Kingdom

Main Scope:

Certification of Persons – ISO/IEC 17024 (EA)

Annex 1: New IAF MLA Signatories, New Regional MLA Scope Extensions and New AB MLA Scope Extensions *continued*

BoA: Vietnam

Main Scope:

Management Systems Certification – ISO/IEC 17021(-1)

Sub-Scope:

Level 5: ISO 14001 (PAC)

DAC: Dubai, UAE

Main Scope:

Product Certification – ISO/IEC 17065 (PAC)

INN: Chile

Main Scope:

Product Certification – ISO/IEC 17065 (IAAC)

PCA: Poland

Main Scope:

Product Certification – ISO/IEC 17065

Sub-Scopes:

Level 4: GlobalG.A.P. General Regulations

Level 5: GlobalG.A.P. IFA Control Points and Compliance Criteria (EA)

TAF: Chinese Taipei

Main Scope:

Product Certification – ISO/IEC 17065

Sub-Scopes:

Level 4: GlobalG.A.P. General Regulations

Level 5: GlobalG.A.P. IFA Control Points and Compliance Criteria (PAC)





**Certified Once
Accepted Everywhere**



IAF Secretariat

Elva Nilsen
28 Chemin Old Chelsea
Box 1811
Chelsea, Quebec
CANADA J9B 1A0

Phone: +1 (613) 454 8159

Email: iaf@iaf.nu

www.iaf.nu

