

Current Situation and Future Aspects of APLAC Activities

**TERENCE CHAN
APLAC CHAIR**

Chapters

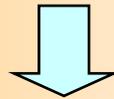
- 1) What is accreditation and How does it help?
- 2) Role and Evolution of APLAC
- 3) APLAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA)
- 4) APLAC and Regulators
- 5) The Future of APLAC

What is accreditation and How does it help?

Accreditation



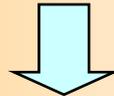
Accreditation Body
- provide assurance



Accredit



**Are the results
reliable?**



Test, Certify, Inspect



**Are they
acceptable?**

Features of Accreditation

- Demonstrated competence
- 3rd party assurance for reliability of results
 - independent and free from conflict of interest
- For specific activities
 - Only for specific tests, calibrations, inspections, certifications which have been rigorously assessed
- Continuous monitoring
 - Reassessments and surveillance
- Using international standards
 - ISO/IEC 17011, 17020 & 17025, etc.
- Flexible
 - Criteria can be tailored to suit individual applications, e.g., regulatory requirements

Benefits of Accreditation

Laboratories, certification bodies and inspection bodies

- 3rd party confirmation of competence
- A level playing field for competition

Users of laboratories, certification bodies and inspection bodies

- Assurance of results
- Identification of reliable service providers

Regulators

- A platform for accepting testing, certification and inspection results
- A tool for making use of private testing, certification and inspection service for regulatory purpose

Role and Evolution of APLAC

Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation

- Established 1992
- Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA)
 - Testing and certification, November 1997
 - Inspection, November 2003
 - ISO 15189, April 2007
 - Reference material producer, December 2007
- APLAC Constitution and incorporation: 2006

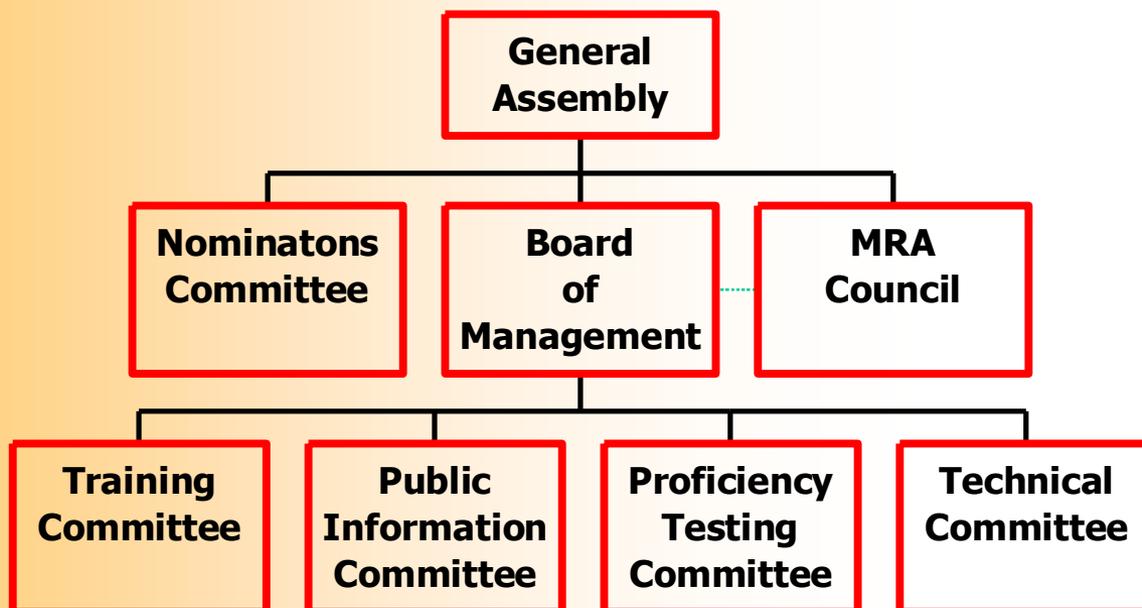
Membership

- **Full members**
 - Fully operational accreditation bodies for laboratory and inspection body in APEC economies
 - Similar accreditation bodies in other economies subject to approval of three-fourths majority of full members
 - Will consider accepting ABs from middle Asia
- **Associate members**
 - Organisations interested in accreditation of laboratories and inspection bodies

APLAC's Role

- Improve and harmonise accreditation quality for laboratories, inspection bodies and reference material producers
- Provide recognition to competent accreditation bodies through mutual recognition arrangement (MRA)
- Promote accreditation as an efficient tool for trade facilitation and societal development
- Regional authority for laboratory, inspection and reference material producer accreditation
- Platform for members to help each other

APLAC's Structure



APLAC Culture

- Rigorous evaluations
- Independent MRA decisions made by the MRA Council
- Transparent operation well documented in published documents and the APLAC quality manual
- Continuous improvement
- Enthusiastic and helpful fellow members
- Close cooperation with international and regional cooperations of accreditation and regulators

Significant Statistics

- 37 full members, 8 associate members,
- 32 MRA signatories
 - Testing: 31, Calibration: 24, ISO 15189: 11, Inspection : 13, Reference Material Producer: 4
- Cooperation with ILAC, SADCA, APEC, APLMF, PASC, BIPM, ISO and WTO
- MoUs with EA, IAAC, APMP, PAC and PTB
- In the past 4 years
 - 2 full members and 5 associate members joined
 - 6 new MRA signatories, 18 extensions of scope of recognition by existing signatories
 - 2 new fields added to the MRA
 - 15 new and 79 revised documents issued
 - 26 PT programmes organised
 - 15 training courses/workshops organised

APLAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA)

Terms of APLAC MRA

Signatories

- use equivalent accreditation procedures
- recognise the accreditation granted by other signatories
- accept endorsed reports and certificates issued by accredited organisations of other signatories
- recommend and promote acceptance of endorsed reports and certificates of other signatories in its own economy
- inform other signatories of significant changes in status and practice
- contribute to the work of APLAC

Characteristics of APLAC MRA



- Mature and well structured, since 1997
- Open to all full members
- Recognition for specific types of accreditation stated in the scope of recognition
- Separate sets of criteria meticulously developed for different types of accreditation
- Well documented application, evaluation, decision and monitoring procedures
- Rigorous evaluations and close monitoring by peer accreditors
- Efficient, independent, reliable and professionally managed
- Well documented system for evaluator training and progression
- Ample pool of enthusiastic evaluators (approx. 100)
- Accepted by the global MRA administered by the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation

MRA Criteria

- MR 001 and other MR series documents
- Relevant ISO/IEC standards, e.g.,
 - ISO/IEC 17011,
 - ILAC/IAF A series documents,
 - ILAC P series documents, and
 - application documents such as ISO/IEC 17025, ISO 15189 and ISO/IEC 17020
- Initial evaluation and periodic re-evaluations every 4 years, and closer monitoring as determined by the MRA Council

MRA facilitates cross border acceptance of results

- APLAC MRA signatories recommend third parties to accept results issued by foreign organisations accredited by other signatories
- Such recommendation are often adopted as ABs are local authorities in competence assessment
- As MRA is an open system and based on internationally accepted standard of competence, it does not favour local suppliers and can be used to provide assurance in testing and inspection results without violating the WTO Technical Barrier to Trade agreement

Benefits of APLAC MRA to Suppliers

- Minimize testing costs, delays and logistical difficulties
- Help to identify reliable laboratories and inspection bodies, local or overseas
- Speed up market access and response to market changes
- Reliable, reduced risk of non-conformity
- Results generally recognised globally, reduced uncertainty on acceptability

Benefits of APLAC MRA to users of products

- Assurance on product safety and compliance
- Speed up access to latest products and technology
- Reduced price because of more competition
- More choice

World Accreditation Structure

Laboratory / Inspection Bodies

International

ILAC

Regional

APLAC

EA

IAAC

Others

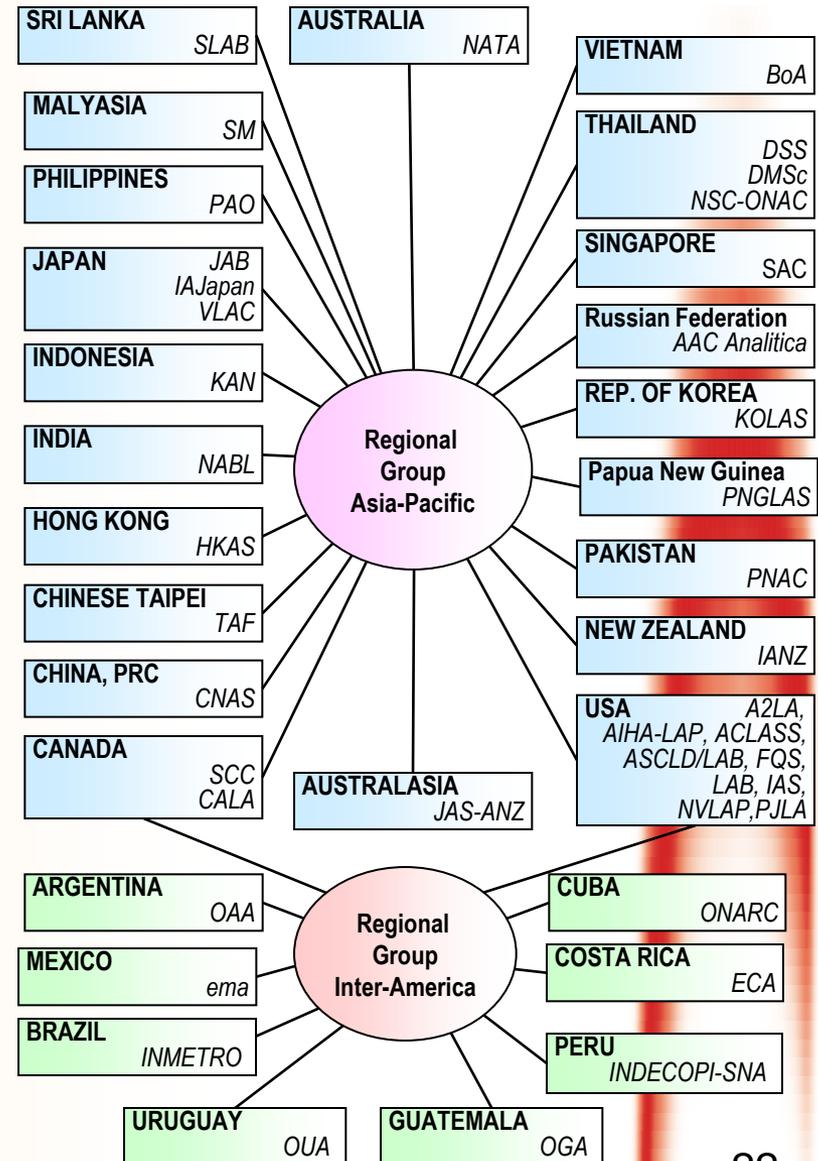
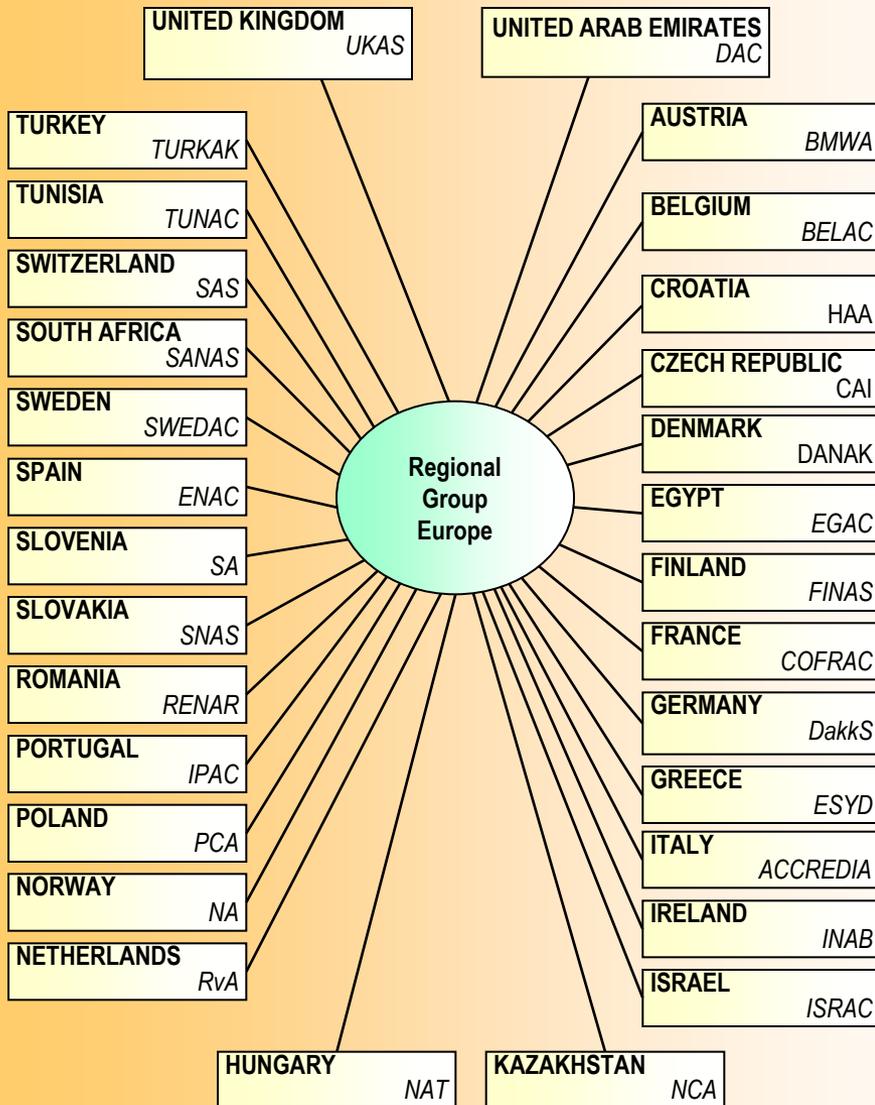
Economies

Accreditation
Bodies

Labs / IBs

Global mutual recognition through
arrangements of international and regional cooperations

APLAC/ILAC MRA Signatories



APLAC and Regulators

Support to Regulators

- APLAC and its members welcome cooperation with regulators and their input
- Accreditation criteria can be tailored to meet regulatory requirements
- Regulators are welcome to observe MRA evaluations
- APLAC MRA underpins APEC Government to Government MRAs
- APLAC participates in APEC SCSC activities

Government to Government MRA vs APLAC MRA



G to G MRA

APLAC MRA

Level	Government	Technical
Commitment	Binding, subject to negotiation	Not binding, may be used whenever it provides benefit
Flexibility	Less flexible	More flexible, can be used to the best advantage of the users. Can be used to support G to G MRAs.
Negotiation	Usually takes a long time to negotiate	Already in place for most APEC economies

Government to Government MRA vs APLAC MRA (cont'd)



	G to G MRA	APLAC MRA
Factors considered	Administrative, political, technical and others	Purely technical
Coverage	Usually for specific sectors	Wider coverage, for specific technical disciplines
Monitoring	Usually through reviews & market feedback	Through on-site re-evaluation, market feedback and others
Response to discrepancy	May take longer time	Very fast through the feedback mechanism of APLAC

Benefits of APLAC MRA to Regulators

- Reliable and credible means for accepting testing & inspection results, especially from foreign economies
- Minimum cost to regulators
- Can be used to the best benefit of regulators
- Can be used with minimal administrative overhead
- Not considered a technical barrier to trade
- Use of accreditation will not increase the cost to suppliers or consumers
- No need for negotiation
- Ready for use now

The Future of APLAC

Strategic Plan

Vision

- To be a leading and respected authority providing reliable global solutions for the recognition of technical competence

Strategic Plan

2-Year Goal

- Enhance international and regional relationship
- Assist members to develop their capability
 - Will organise more training activities
- Promote and facilitate active participation
 - Will provide more assistance to emerging AB from developing economies
- Continue expanding the scope and improving the quality of the APLAC MRA
 - MRA will be expanded to cover proficiency testing provider and other types of accreditation as required
- Improve efficiency and value of service

Strategic Plan

5-Year Goal

- Enhance stakeholder involvement
 - Devise ways to obtain input from stakeholders
- Having members from all APEC economies
 - Only Chile is not in APLAC
- Measure APLAC performance against the strategic plan

Strategic Plan

10-Year Goal

- All APLAC full members are APLAC MRA signatories
 - will provide more assistance to our members
- Maintain leadership in global accreditation
 - will encourage our members to become more active in international accreditation activities
- Comprehensive acceptance of APLAC MRA by all stakeholders
 - will enhance promotion of the MRA
- Preserve APLAC culture
 - will maintain an environment conducive to cooperation between members

End