



IAF Procedure Document

IAF MLA

Procedure for Identification of Equivalence of Accreditations

Accreditation reduces risk for business and its customers by assuring them that accredited bodies are competent to carry out the work they undertake. Accreditation bodies which are members of the International Accreditation Forum, Inc. (IAF) are required to operate at the highest standard and to require the bodies they accredit to comply with appropriate international standards and IAF Guidance to the application of those standards.

Accreditations granted by accreditation body members of the IAF Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MLA), based on regular surveillance to assure the equivalence of their accreditation programmes, allows companies with an accredited conformity assessment certificate in one part of the world to have that certificate recognised everywhere else in the world.

Therefore certificates in the fields of management systems, products, services, personnel and other similar programs of conformity assessment issued by bodies accredited by members of the IAF MLA are relied upon in international trade.

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1. Introduction

1.1. IAF aims to facilitate world trade by working to remove technical barriers that may flow from demands for specific certification and/or registration of management systems, products services, personnel and other programs of conformity assessment. Its primary means of doing that is by achieving a single Multilateral Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MLA) for each program, based on the equivalence of accreditation programmes operated by accreditation body members, verified through peer review among those accreditation body members.

1.2. IAF promotes the international acceptance of accreditations granted by its MLA signatory accreditation body members, based on the equivalence of their accreditation programmes. The MLA allows companies with an accredited conformity assessment certificate in one part of the world to have that certificate recognised everywhere else in the world.

1.3. In order to achieve maximum value from their membership in an IAF MLA, members need to identify their membership of the IAF MLA and consequent equivalence and interchangeability of accreditations in the relevant program with other members of the IAF MLA.

2. Demonstration of MLA Membership by Accreditation Bodies

2.1. Accreditation body members of an IAF MLA are authorized to use the following words to describe themselves. The words must appear alongside the name and logo of the accreditation body -

"Member of the International Accreditation Forum Multilateral Recognition Arrangement for (Name of Program)"

2.2. Accreditation Body Members which are members of both an IAF MLA and a Regional Group MLA which is also a member of the IAF MLA for the same program may use the following words to identify their membership of both the IAF and Regional MLA's –

"Member of the International Accreditation Forum and (Name of Regional Group) Multilateral Recognition Arrangement for (Name of Program)"

2.3. The words above should not be used unless directly associated with the full name or acronym of the accreditation body. The words should be in a similar typeface and size as the name of the accreditation body. Where the accreditation certificate is issued in a language other than English the words quoted above should be translated into the language of the certificate.

2.4. Where appropriate the acronym “IAF” may be used in place of the full set of words set out in paragraph 2.1. Where the words in paragraph are appropriate the acronym “IAF” and the acronym of the Regional Group may be used. When the certificate is in another language the acronym equivalent to “IAF” in the relevant language shall be used. The acronym of the specific program may also be used

3. Claims of Equivalence by Accredited Certification/Registration Bodies

3.1. Accreditation body members of the IAF MLA may authorize their Accredited Certification/Registration Bodies, when they operate within the scope of the IAF MLA, to use the same words (or IAF MLA acronym) alongside the name and logo of their accreditation Body.

4. Examples

4.1. The following examples of the use of the words and acronym are given as examples to explain this procedure. These examples are intended to clarify the intent of this Procedure. It is not necessary to copy these examples precisely.

4.2. Accreditation Body Use (either acceptable, according to member needs) –



Accreditation Body Logo

**Member of the International Accreditation
Forum Multilateral Recognition Arrangement
for Quality Management Systems**

IAF MLA “Words”



Accreditation Body Logo

**Member of
the IAF MLA
for QMS**

IAF MLA “Words”

4.3. An IAF MLA Group Member may authorise bodies it accredits to include reference to the membership in the MLA Group, along with its own mark, as follows (either acceptable, according to member needs) –



Certification Body Logo

**Accredited by Member of the
International Accreditation
Forum Multilateral
Recognition Arrangement for
Quality Management Systems**

IAF MLA “Words”



Accreditation
Details

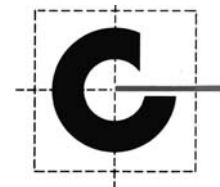
Accreditation Body Logo
and Accreditation Details



Certification Body Logo

**Accredited
by Member
of the IAF
MLA for
QMS**

IAF MLA “Words”



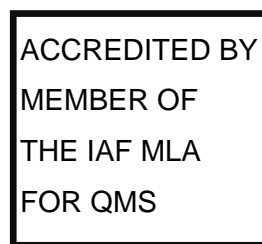
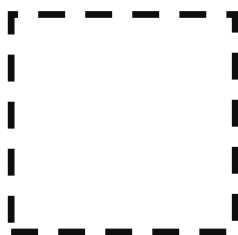
Accreditation Details

Accreditation Body Logo
and Accreditation Details

4.3.1. An example of the use of the IAF MLA “Words” in a language other than English follows –

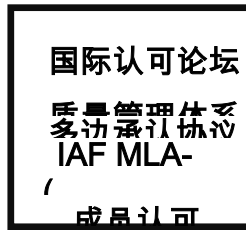
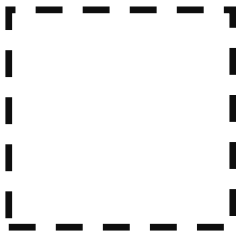
The Words and Format used in CNACR Accredited Certificates

- English version



Note: The left is the logo of registration body accredited by CNACR. The middle is the words used to show the status of IAF MLA for QMS. The right is the CNACR accreditation logo.

- Chinese version



Note: 1. The format of Chinese version is the same as English version.

Note: 2. The first three lines of the “words” in Chinese is “International Accreditation Forum Multilateral Recognition Arrangement for Quality Management System”. The last line is “Member Accredited”.

End of IAF Procedure for Identification of Equivalence of Accreditations

5. Further Information

For Further Information on this document or other IAF documents, contact any member of IAF or the IAF Secretariat.

For contact details of members of IAF see -
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