

Directorate General for  
Enterprise and Industry



European Commission

# ACCREDITATION POLICY

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*Regulatory approach for the free movement of goods*

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## Accreditation

**The Commission policy in the area of accreditation is enshrined in the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council setting out the requirements for accreditation and market surveillance relating to the marketing of product**

## Timeframe / Process

- **Proposal for the Regulation was adopted by the Commission on 14 February 2007**
- **3 Presidencies DE/PT/SI**
- **EP Plenary voted in favour 21 February 2008**
- **Vote in Council expected before summer 2008 (COREPER approved by qualified majority 13 February)**
- **Entry into force 20 days after publication in OJ, but apply as from 1 January 2010**

## The New Legislative Framework

- **The Policy on accreditation is part of the New Legislative Framework which covers also**
  - **Market surveillance**
  - **Notified Bodies**
  - **Role and significance of CE marking**
  - **Common definitions & obligations/procedures**
- **Objective of the New Legislative framework is to strengthen the system through review of the main features and addition of missing elements such as accreditation**
- **Objective is to create trust in accredited certificates**

## Why introduce Accreditation?

- **Currently operates in all Member States, however due to lack of a common legal basis:**
  - Different approaches to accreditation
  - Differing systems with uneven rigour
  - Uneven use in support of notification of conformity assessment bodies in the Member States
  
- **Need to introduce a framework for accreditation and to lay down principles for its operation and organisation at Community level to ensure uniform application**

## Accreditation – main principles

- **Rules on accreditation provided for in the Regulation apply both to the mandatory and voluntary areas**
- **Scope of Regulation: No exemptions**
- **Accreditation carried out as a public authority activity**
- **Last level of control providing confidence in the conformity assessment system**
- **Single national accreditation body per Member State / non competition**

## Accreditation – main principles (2)

- **Set of requirements for national accreditation bodies (in line with ISO/ILAC/IAF)**
  - Be completely independent from commercial motivations;
  - Operate on a not for profit basis
  - Be authoritative and impartial bodies;
  - Not be in competition with each other and with the accredited conformity assessment bodies
  - NOT be involved in conformity assessment activities for which they accredit other bodies;
  - demonstrate a high level of competence via participation in peer evaluations managed by EA

## Implementations measures

- **General “political” Guidelines for Cooperation between EA and EC / EFTA / National authorities**
  - Main principles of cooperation
  - Common objectives of development of accreditation in Europe and the rest of the world
- **Conclusion of a framework contract between the European Communities and EA**
  - Administrative and financial conditions under which Community financing may be granted to EA for the proper operation of the peer evaluation system and other actions

## Implementations measures (2)

- **Setting up an internal EC Steering Committee for accreditation**
- **Follow national legislative evolutions in Member States**
- **Publication of a list of national accreditation bodies**

### Conclusions

- **We have come a long way to stabilise accreditation as the final control link in the chain for a level playing field.**
- **We hope we have all the tools to establish trust in the market place and that all this contributes to good quality competitive economic operators and thus good quality and safe products**

**Thank you for your attention**

### Questions

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